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ABSTRACT

This report presents findings from the third phase of a longitudinal study of teacher education, based on a survey of 289 students in their third and final year of training at Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch Colleges of Education in New Zealand and interviews with 74 of the students. The study investigated students' perceptions of their third year of training (specifically their courses), students' perceptions of the curriculum areas they were involved with in their first year of teaching, key beliefs about education and learning, changes in student views between the beginning of training and entering the classroom, student performance and contributing factors, relationship with parents of students, attitudes toward teaching Maori, assessment of student teachers, college workload, and students' intentions. A series of six student profiles is provided in order to give a more rounded view of individual students. Major findings include, among others: (1) at the end of their training, almost all the students were confident about teaching and running an integrated curriculum program in their own classroom; (2) students were least looking forward to teaching Maori and music and using computers in the classroom; and (3) students were most looking forward to teaching reading, physical education, and written language--curriculum areas where they had most experience during training. (JDD)

WINDOWS ON TEACHER EDUCATION

Student progress through Colleges of Education

Phase 3 **The Third Year**

Margery Renwick
June Vize

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4

CONTENTS

Page

PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE: 1991 vii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS vii

INTRODUCTION 1
- Student Profiles and Quotations 2
- Aims of the Study 3
- Research Objectives for Phase 3 3
- Summary of Main Findings 4

METHODOLOGY 7
- The 1989 Cohort of Trainees 7
- Data Collection 8
- The Questionnaire 9
- Questionnaire Response Rate 9
- The Interview Sample 10
- The Interviews 10

THE COLLEGE PROGRAMME 11
- Students' Overall Impressions of Their Third Year of Teacher Education 11
- The College Courses 17
- Courses Students Regret Not Having Taken 21
- Optional Courses Which Students Think Should Have Been Compulsory 22
- Most Useful Courses 22
- Most Useful Parts of Training 23

STUDENT PROFILES 1 and 2 26

THE CURRICULUM 33
- Curriculum Areas Most and Least Looked Forward To 33
- Students' Experience of Teaching Various Curriculum Areas 41
- Students' Knowledge of the Content of Various Primary School Curriculum Areas 43
- Curriculum Areas Not Seen Taught by Students 45
- Students' Experience of an Integrated Primary Programme 46
- Students' Confidence in Using Computers 47

STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 49
- Student Reaction to Teaching Approaches Advocated by Lecturers 62
- Links Between Teaching Practice and the College Course 64
- Practices in Schools in Advance of Those Advocated by the College? 67
- Students' Preparation for Teaching in a Range of Organisational Settings or Types of Schools 69
- Students' Preparation to Carry Out Various Professional Responsibilities 70
- Age and Special Groups of Children Students Would Prefer to Teach 73

Student Views on Reasons Why Children Succeed or Fail at School 76
Students' Key Beliefs About Education and Learning 77

COLLEGE OBJECTIVES 81
Auckland 81
Wellington 82
Christchurch 83

STUDENT PROFILES 3 and 4 85

STUDENTS' RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS 91
Importance of Parent/Teacher Relationships 91
Difficulties Students Envisaged in Their Relationship with Parents 92
A Teacher's Responsibilities Towards Parents 92
The Part Students Expect Parents to Play in Their Classroom 92
Students' Confidence to Talk With Parents and Report to Them 93
Students' Preparation for Their Relationship With Parents 94
Confidence With Parents 95

SOME EQUITY ISSUES 96
Equity Issues: Student Interviews 97
Maori Language 97
Students Who Had Had as Much Opportunity to Learn Maori as They Wished 98
Students Who Had Not Had as Much Opportunity to Learn Maori as They Wished 100

ASSESSMENT 104
Assessment of the Students by the College 104
Do Students Feel That Assessment Has Helped To Improve Their Performance? 107
Assessment on Teaching Experience 108
Self-Evaluation 109
Assessing Children in the Classroom 109
Tracking Student Performance 112
The Purposes of Assessment at the Colleges 112
Changes to College Assessment Practices 116
College Reports or Profiles 116
Student Views on Whether Their College Profile Would Help Them to Get a Job 118

THE COLLEGES' TUTORIAL SYSTEMS 120
Auckland 120
Wellington 123
Christchurch 127

UNIVERSITY STUDY 130
Had Students Made the Right Decision? 130

Students Who Did *Not* Attend University 131
Students' Attitude Towards University Study 132

STUDENT FINANCES 135

STUDENT PROFILES 5 and 6 137

COLLEGE WORKLOAD AND LENGTH OF COLLEGE COURSE 143
College Workload 143
Length of College Course 145
Are Students More or Less Motivated to Teach Than When They Began the Course? 149
Students' Overall Reaction to Their Preparation for the Classroom 150
Students' Overall Confidence to Teach 153
Changes to Course of Training 153
Key Events 158

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE 164
Student Attitudes to Teaching as a Career 164
Students' Plans for Their Own Professional Development 165
The Future 165

CONCLUSION 167

Bibliography 171

TABLES

Table Page
1 Paths Followed by Students in the 1989 Cohort 8
2 Student Attitudes Towards Various Curriculum Areas: those they were most looking forward to at the End of their training (ranked) 34
3 Student Attitudes Towards Various Curriculum Areas: those they least looking forward to at the End of their their training (ranked) 35
4 Student Attitudes Towards Various Curriculum Areas at the End of their Their Training: subject groupings 36
5 Curriculum Areas Most Looked Forward To: ranked 38
6 Curriculum Areas Least Looked Forward To: ranked 39
7 Curriculum Areas Students Have Seen Taught in Schools 41
8 Curriculum Areas Students Have Had a Chance to Teach in Schools 42
9 Students' Knowledge of Curriculum Content 44
10 Students' Experience of an Integrated Primary Programme 46
11 Student's Confidence to Use Computers to Assist Children's Learning in the Classroom 48
12 Students' Preparation for Various Organisational Settings and Types of Schools 69
13 Students' Confidence with Various Aspects of Classroom Management 71
14 The Age Group Students Would Most Like to Teach 74
15 Particular Groups of Children With Which Students Would Like to Work 75
16 Students' Rankings of Extent to which Auckland College Objectives Addressed 82
17 Students' Rankings of Extent to which Wellington College Objectives Addressed 83
18 Students' Rankings of Extent to which Christchurch College Objectives Addressed 84
19 Students' Preparation for Dealing with Various Equity Issues 96
20 Number of Students Able to Speak Maori on Entry to College 98
21 Subjects Students Feel Most and Least Confident to Assess 110
22 Examples of Typical Student Assessment 114
23 Example of Course Assessment of Student Whose Performance was not Satisfactory 115
24 Students' Future Plans for University Study 130
25 Reasons Given by Students for Not Taking University Courses 131
26 Student Finances 135
27 The College Workload 143
28 Student Attitudes Towards the Length of the College Course 145
29 Students' Motivation to Teach at End of Course Compared With on Entry to College 149
30 Extent to Which College Course Has Prepared Students for the Classroom 150
31 Student Intentions with Regard to Teaching as a Career 164

32 What Students Expect to be Doing in Five Years' Time 165

FIGURES

Figure Page
1 Most Useful Parts of Training 24
2 Students' Preparation to be Primary Teachers 50

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents findings from the third phase of a longitudinal study of teacher education. The material is based on two sets of data collected from students at Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch Colleges of Education. First, the total cohort of students in their third and final year of training was surveyed by questionnaire. These same students had been surveyed previously in 1989, on entry to college. Second, data were collected from students in our interview sample now in their third year of training.

As with our first two reports, we have had problems in knowing how best to write up the material collected from students, particularly as we are working in three colleges. If we record the students' perceptions college by college, there would be considerable repetition. If, on the other hand, we report student reactions across colleges, we would give the impression that the student experience in the three colleges is largely the same. We have tended to write up our material by taking issues across colleges but significant differences between colleges have been recorded. Our problem has been compounded by having to work with two sets of data with findings that sometimes repeat each other. Much of the material in this report is based on findings from the questionnaire, but the more qualitative data collected through face-to-face interviews has been used to flesh out the report and, in some cases, to discuss issues not raised through the questionnaire. (Findings from the questionnaire are from a larger pool of students and are easier to quantify than those from our smaller interview sample.) Some of the data show up interesting differences between the colleges. Where this is the case any overall figure, weighted heavily in favour of Auckland because of that college's greater numbers, is not an accurate picture of the views of students in each college. Overall figures can, however, be regarded as indicating the views of a large proportion of students in our study completing three-year courses of training.

The study is a longitudinal one attempting to interpret students' responses to courses of teacher education as they 'unfold over time'. In the introduction to our last report we discussed some of the problems associated with this methodological approach, particularly in a period of rapid change. These problems have remained with us. We are conscious that the courses of training described in this report have changed since the data were collected and that the experience of students entering the colleges in 1992 differs in a significant number of respects from that of our own cohort of students. Of particular importance is the move in all colleges towards a closer relationship with the university. In Auckland, for example, all trainees entering a course of primary teacher training now enrol for a conjoint B.Ed. degree. We are confident that the material collected from our 1989 cohort of students accurately reflects their experience of the three-year course of training. We think it likely that many of the issues raised by them will be pertinent to later intakes of students.

A second issue we have not previously discussed is the movement within a cohort of students over a three-year period. All the students who entered college when we began our study were training to be teachers, but the courses they took varied from two to four years. This fact increases the difficulty of tracking the students' progress and making comparative comments about their experience. Added to this is the number of students who have withdrawn from college either permanently or temporarily. The net effect of these two factors means that although we started with a possible cohort of 741 students, our final questionnaire for third years was returned by only 289 students (see also p.10.) In both cases, however, these figures represent a response rate of more than 80% of students who could have been expected to complete a questionnaire - a high percentage for a research study of this kind.

A further problem with our total cohort, and the interview sample within it, is the variation in size between the three colleges. When we have looked at issues across colleges, our comments necessarily reflect more accurately the views of Auckland students as they make up 67% of our total cohort.

We are aware, too, that an account written on the basis of student perceptions and accounts of their experience is necessarily incomplete. Students' views need to be placed within wider contexts if some of the issues they raise are to be discussed realistically with college lecturers, heads of departments and senior management.

From the outset we recognised the need to set this study in the wider context of social and economic issues. An important factor for our cohort of students is that they are the first group of graduating trainees no longer guaranteed a job. This must have an impact on students' perceptions and morale.

We have tried to work collaboratively with staff at the colleges, although lecturers' busy timetables, our own workload and the cost involved in regular college visits have meant that there has been less staff involvement in the study than we had originally hoped. Nevertheless, we have discussed our findings with the principals and groups of staff at each college, and draft reports have been sent to the colleges for comment before publication. We appreciate the fact that lecturers have been open and frank in their discussions with us - not always easy in times of rapid change, when staff are under considerable pressure.

The research project is now entering its final stage. In the third term of 1991 we interviewed those two-year graduate students in our interview sample who had completed their course of training in 1990 and were in classrooms in 1991. In the third term of 1992 we will be interviewing those students from our cohort who undertook the three-year course and were appointed to a teaching position. The findings from both these sets of interviews will be the basis of our final report, which will also include an overview of the issues raised in the first three reports, some longitudinal analysis of the experiences of a sample of students, and discussion of the policy implications that arise from the study.

Student Profiles and Quotations

When research data are analysed according to questions asked of respondents it is easy to lose sight of the individuals who make up the study. We have included in this report a series of student profiles in order to give a more rounded view of individual students. For similar reasons we have made extensive use of direct quotations from students. For the student profiles, we selected students from the three colleges in the study, although individual colleges are not identified, and included male and female students from different ethnic backgrounds. Two of the students used in the first- and second- year profiles were also used in the third year but we have had to substitute for four others. These are the reactions of individual students and cannot be regarded as representative of the views and experiences of the whole group. The students concerned were able to read and comment on the profiles based on their interviews and their responses to the questionnaire, and they are published with their consent.

Aims of the Study

The aims of the study are:

1. To record the progress of a sample of students through their training and out into the classroom.

2. To establish those factors which contribute to variations in students' progress through their course of training.

3. To isolate 'key events' in students' experiences which influence their later progress as students and teachers.

Research Objectives for Phase 3

The issues to be investigated are:

1. Students' perceptions of their third year of training.

2. Students' perceptions of their first year of teaching (that is, graduate or two-year trainees in 1991 and three-year trainees in 1992). (This material is not included in this report because the data for three-year trainees as first-year teachers has yet to be collected.)

3. Students' key beliefs about education and learning when they enter the classroom.

4. The changes that have occurred in student views between the beginning of training and entering the classroom.

5. The performance of our sample of students during their course in terms of the assessment made by the colleges themselves over the three years.

6. Those factors which appear to contribute towards variations in student performance.

7. The intentions of students with respect to teaching as a career.

Summary of Main Findings

These generalisations are based on data collected in 1991 through a questionnaire completed by 289 third-year students at the Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch Colleges of Education, and from interviews of 74 students at the same colleges.

* At the end of their training 97% of students were either confident (57%) or very confident (40%) about teaching. Only 3% said they were 'not very confident'.

* Nearly all students, 96%, say they are either 'very confident' (42%), or 'confident' (54%), about running an integrated curriculum programme in their own classroom.

* More than 90% of students overall are confident or very confident about their knowledge of curriculum content in language, physical education, mathematics and art. More than 85% are also confident or very confident in social studies, science and health. Thirty percent of students say they are not at all confident about the curriculum content in music and 48% are not at all confident about the curriculum content in Maori.

* Students overall are most likely to be looking forward to teaching reading, physical education and written language. These are also the curriculum areas where they have had most experience in schools during training.

* Students are least likely to be looking forward to using computers in the classroom and teaching Maori and music.

* Students are likely to think the most useful part of their training is the teaching practice sections, supported by particular college courses and individual lecturers.

* Students on the whole regard the teaching methods advocated by the college to be up-to-date or in advance of practices in the schools, although they may consider individual lecturers to be out of touch with the classroom.

* Students are likely to consider themselves best prepared to teach children in the middle school.

* A third of the students did not consider themselves well prepared to teach in rural schools or to handle mainstreamed children.

* Students believe their relationships with parents to be important. Most are comfortable about talking with parents about their children and explaining their classroom philosophy and programme. They are less confident about formal reporting sessions.

* About two-thirds of the students across the three colleges said they had not had the opportunity to learn as much Maori language as they would have liked. This was particularly the case in Auckland and Christchurch.

* Students varied in their attitude towards the workload in each of the three years. Students in Auckland were most likely to be satisfied with the workload in the first year, Wellington students with the third year and Christchurch with the second and third years.

* Students also varied in their attitudes towards the length of the course of training. Students in Christchurch were most likely to think three years was about right (62%). Sixty-one percent of Auckland students and 52% of those from Wellington thought the three-year course as they had experienced it was too long.

* Students are confident about assessing children in the classroom but not equally confident across the curriculum.

* Students' main concern in the third year with the system of assessment is that it should help them to get a job.

* About two-thirds of the students thought their final profile accurately reflected their performance as a student but many thought profiles were not sufficiently specific and did not differentiate between students.

* The main reason students did not take university courses was the extra fees and expenses. These students are now likely to regret not having taken university courses and would take them if they had the choice again.

* Most students who had taken university courses are pleased that they did so and feel that university study will contribute towards their effectiveness in the classroom.

* Almost three-quarters of the students had debts; a quarter of these had debts over $5,000.

* Overall, 60% of students said they were either as motivated or more motivated to be primary teachers than when they began the course. (This percentage compares with 80% of those interviewed in year two.) The most common reason given by those students who were less motivated was disillusionment because of poor job prospects.

- Students are less likely than when they began their training to see teaching as a lifelong career.

- The initial concern for graduating students is to get a job.

METHODOLOGY

The 1989 Cohort of Trainees

In 1989 we sent a questionnaire to all students admitted to a primary course of training in three colleges of education: Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. The 549 students who responded to the questionnaire have followed different paths through their course of teacher education. Those who followed a three-year college course were asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of their training in 1991. A sample of these students were also interviewed in their third year. Other students were graduates or near-graduates who did a two-year course; we interviewed them in schools in 1991. A third group decided to complete a university degree at the same time as their college course, an option which takes four years. These students will be asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of their course in 1992. Finally, there were students who, for various reasons, left the college either permanently or temporarily. Table 1 provides the details of the 1989 cohort of students and the various paths they followed.

Table 1

Paths Followed by Students in the 1989 Cohort

	Auck	Wgtn	ChCh	Total
Students who were sent questionnaires in 1989	367	193	181	741
Students who completed questionnaires in 1989	251	142	156	549
Students who completed a TWO-YEAR course or a shortened course	27	28	34	89
Students who are taking a FOUR-YEAR B.ED. course	NA	25	25	50
Students who have left or are on leave from the college	41	33	42	125
Students who completed the original 1989 questionnaire and were sent a questionnaire in 1991	183	56	46	285
Students who completed the original 1989 questionnaire and returned the 1991 questionnaire	149	43	35	227
Students who returned the 1991 questionnaire but had not returned the 1989 questionnaire	45	15	2	62

Data Collection

Data for this, the third phase of the study, were collected in two ways:

- a questionnaire survey of the total cohort of trainees who started their training in 1989 and who were completing their studies at the end of 1991

- face-to-face interviews with a sample of the total cohort.

The Questionnaire

All students from the three colleges who had begun their training in 1989 and were finishing it at the end of 1991 were asked to complete a questionnaire towards the end of the third term of 1991. The questionnaire was designed to provide information about:

- student views on the effectiveness of their training in preparing them for the classroom
- student views of their own professional competence
- student attitudes to teaching and learning
- the intended career plans and future professional development of students
- student finances
- student judgements as to how well the college had fulfilled its own aims
- student opinion on changes they would like to see to the courses of training.

These same students had filled in an earlier questionnaire which had been sent to all successful applicants in the three colleges in 1989. The earlier questionnaire had provided us with a picture of students entering the three colleges in terms of:

- a basic demographic profile
- the experiences they brought to college
- the attitudes they had towards their training and their expectations of the college course
- their views on learning and teaching
- their views on equity issues.

Students in this cohort, therefore, completed questionnaires *before* and *after* their course of training. Using the material from these two questionnaires we hope to be able to trace any changes in the students' views over the three-year training period, for example, in their ideas on how children learn and their intentions concerning teaching as a career.

The questionnaire data have been analysed using SAS. Differences between colleges were tested for statistical significance using the chi-square test (χ^2). In the report we have stated those results, which are statistically significant according to the above test. For all results $p < .05$.

Questionnaire Response Rate

The overall number of students who responded to our first questionnaire in 1989 was 549. This was a response rate of 81%. In 1991, 289 students responded to the questionnaire, which was still approximately 80% of 'eligible' students.

The Interview Sample

As in previous years, a sample of students from the total cohort took part in face-to-face interviews. In 1989, 107 students had been interviewed and, in 1990, 105 students. In 1991 a total of 74 students were interviewed: 30 in Auckland, 23 in Wellington and 21 in Christchurch. Fewer students were interviewed in 1991 largely because a proportion of our sample had finished their college course at the end of 1990. These were students who had enrolled for the two-year course of training as graduates or near-graduates. Seventeen of these students were later interviewed as year-one teachers in the third term of 1991 (five from Auckland, five from Wellington and seven from Christchurch). The data from these interviews will be included in our next report, along with data from further interviews of year-one teachers to be carried out in 1992.

We did consider substituting for other students who had left the college or were not available to be interviewed, but decided against this because of the longitudinal nature of the study.

The Interviews

As in the previous two years, students were interviewed halfway through the year, in this case their third and final year of training. Where possible, students were interviewed by the same interviewers.

The interview schedule was designed to collect information about:

- students' general impression of the college from a third-year perspective
- the college course
- the students' view of their professional development
- school reforms as they affected the teacher's relationship with parents
- teaching sections
- equity issues
- assessment
- university study
- tutors
- 'key events'.

THE COLLEGE PROGRAMME

Students' Overall Impressions of Their Third Year of Teacher Education

At the beginning of our interviews of third-year students we asked them to give an overall reaction as to how they were finding the college in their third year. We also asked them what they thought the college did well and what they thought the college did poorly. What follows is a summary by college of the student impressions.

Auckland

When students were asked about their overall reaction to the college as third-year students at least half of those interviewed referred to the good things about the college, particularly the quality of the best courses and lecturers and the friendly, supportive relationship between lecturers and students. As third-years, the students felt familiar and 'comfortable' in the college. 'It's all quite cosy.' Two students described their feelings:

> Actually I'm enjoying it for the first time this year. I think because I've got a lot more confidence and I know basically what I'm supposed to be doing and lecturers are offering us a lot more practical advice.
>
> I'm a bit more intolerant of lecturers wasting my time ... but there are some excellent lecturers here and there's some fantastic opportunities for people to really take advantage of things here with wonderful resources. I've got a very favourable impression of it and I don't actually want to leave. I'm keen to go into teaching but I'm sure I will grieve.

There were three other categories of comments, mentioned in each case by about a quarter of the students interviewed. These were:

* A view that the third-year students we interviewed in 1991 were disadvantaged compared with the intake which started college the year after they did, because this latter group were enrolled in a B.Ed. course of studies. In the words of one student, the third-years were 'the last of the dinosaurs and we've been thrown a really meagre package of what we're supposed to be getting'.

* Irritation at the light college workload compared with previous years, including

courses which they considered repeated work already covered. In the words of two students:

> I think it's disgustingly light. It's actually like a wasted year. A lot of the work that we're doing this year is a repeat of last year, but it's in a different context ... My first two years were just bang, bang, bang, but this year has been such an absolute drop in workload that I've lost my enthusiasm for being here.

> With the workload that we've got now, what we've covered could have been put into two years ... It's so slow you start thinking, "Gosh, why am I here?"

Students gave examples of college timetables which required them, on some days, to be present for only one or two classes; in a few cases whole days were free. This is not unusual in a tertiary institution. It is assumed that students are motivated to work independently. However, the students we interviewed found this frustrating when they would have liked to spend more time on areas of classroom practice, such as assessment of children's work or mainstreaming.

* Relief and excitement at the thought of the course finishing. For some students this was because they felt that this was a 'fill-in' year, but the feeling is probably typical of final-year students in many courses. Training is the means towards starting on a chosen career and, by the end of the course, students are anxious to get out into the 'real world'.

> I'll be glad to get out. I've had enough, I really have. It's nice knowing that in about 10-12 weeks I'll be finished the course. I'll be glad to have the qualifications, because I think it's important, but I've really had enough of college. I'll enjoy teaching when I get out there. It's nice that college is over with.

> Loving it, loving being here and pursuing what I'm going to pursue and obviously looking forward after almost three years to the end of that - to graduate and go to a class next year.

In a range of other comments, students referred favourably to the fact that there was more choice of courses in the third year, and that some courses were more challenging than in previous years; and unfavourably to inconsistencies in assessment methods between departments, and the uneven spread of work, which tended to 'come in lumps'.

☐ What the College Does Well

Not surprisingly, when we asked students what things they thought the college did well and what things it did poorly, they often made comments similar to their overall reaction. Their comments about those things they thought the college did well tended to fall into one of three broad categories:

* The general atmosphere of the college. The college is a good place to be because of:

  - the quality of many individual lecturers, most of whom are 'approachable', and some of whom are 'superb'
  - the diversity of the students, particularly the range of cultural backgrounds and the age range.

  A number of students commented that it was the strengths of individuals, both staff and students, rather than any feeling for 'the college', that impressed them. Others referred to the atmosphere created by discussion which helped students, particularly school leavers, to become more 'open-minded'.

* A good general preparation for teaching because of:

  - the wide range of courses offered
  - the breadth of curriculum covered
  - practical experience in schools.

* The quality of courses in particular departments some of which had improved in the third year, and the resources provided for students, for example, a glass-making kiln in the art department.

In a range of other comments students said the college was a flexible institution and did try 'to cater for everyone'; that the college had excellent facilities, for example, the library and reading centre; and that they appreciated the tutorial and counselling systems.

☐ What the College Does Poorly

A quarter of the students interviewed made no comment or said that 'nothing really stood out'. The main issue raised by the rest was their irritation at time they thought was wasted because:

- the third-year course repeated work covered during the first two years
- there was too much free time during and between courses
- courses which took too long for the course content
- of lack of challenge in and relevance of some courses
- of a few incompetent lecturers.

In a range of other comments, students referred to: lack of co-ordination between departments, lack of opportunity to mix with other year groups, insufficient recognition of prior learning and poor in-house communication.

It should be emphasised that although some Auckland students appeared more critical of their third-year programme than their counterparts in Wellington and Christchurch, they had been more enthusiastic about college courses in previous years, particularly in the first year. For these students, the third year suffered by comparison.

Wellington

As already mentioned, a number of the students in our interview sample were doing a B.A., which meant that in their third year they spent relatively little time at college. Five of these students said they had little comment to make about the college because of this. Two students, however, who were spending more time at college in the third term, commented on their pleasure at returning. The first, doing a science degree, said:

> Fun coming back after being mostly at university ... It made me appreciate it more here. It made me realise that I could show the creative side of myself here and have discussions and put forward my point of view which tends not to happen at university. You're just bombarded with stuff and all the time scrawling it down and you go to labs and do what they say.

The second student said:

> The first half of the year was mostly at varsity but this half I am at college quite a bit and I'm really glad to be at college compared with varsity. I really enjoy teachers' college a lot more in the sense that it is something more personal. Classes are a lot smaller, you're not just a number or a nobody.

More than half of the other students interviewed said that they were enjoying their third year more than the first and second. This was either because:

- the students were familiar with the institution, knew more clearly what they wanted to get out of the college and felt the lecturers knew them well as individuals

or

- the quality of the lectures had improved and lecturers were more accountable. In the words of two students:

  > I think it's improved 100% on the first two years in its professionalism within itself. Lecturers are more consistent across the board, more accountable.

  > Every year in college has changed because they've got more accountable. This year there's heaps more work than there was last year, which is good.

Other students stressed that it was over to the student to get the most out of college. Much depended on the commitment of individual students ('It's got a lot to offer but you have to do a lot yourself'), but students' experiences were also influenced by the particular courses and lecturers they happened to experience.

We interviewed students not long after they had returned to college after their final sole-charge section in the schools. Most had had a successful classroom experience and for some returning to college was a bit of a letdown after they had proved to themselves that they could 'run a class'. College was 'a good place' but they were now ready to leave.

☐ What the College Does Well

The student responses to this question fell into two main categories:

* The range of courses and the quality of individual lecturers and courses. Students appreciated the variety of courses offered and the fact that they were prepared for all curriculum areas. They thought one or two of the departments have had a 'shake-up' since the first year. The best lecturers know the students well and their courses provide 'good resource material'. Lecturers with recent classoom experience were singled out for favourable comment.
* The general 'atmosphere' of the college and the friendly, supportive relationship between staff and students. The college was seen as a 'very personal place' with approachable staff who tried to treat students equitably.

In a range of individual comments students referred to their own personal development as a result of being a student, the usefulness of teaching experience and the college's ability to 'deal well with equity issues'. Once again, there was a feeling that it was up to the student: 'College is what you make of it.' For one student this related to the wide variety of activities and cultural events:

> There's such a variety of things happening. You can get involved in something through the teachers' college that you may never have thought of doing before like drama, arts, craft, music - the Polynesian or cultural things that happen at college. I think that side of things is really vibrant and alive and they often have people come in to perform or speak. I really appreciate access to that ... also the emphasis they have on getting cultural groups to come in and making the most of the different cultures within the college. It is very good for people like me who had very little experience of anything other than my own culture.

☐ What the College Does Poorly

About a quarter of the students interviewed said there was nothing the college did poorly, largely because of perceived improvements since the first and second year.

About three-quarters of the students did have critical comments to make. The most frequent comments were about administrative and organisational matters, particularly the number of organisational and timetable changes that had occurred during the students' three years at college. Some students believe that staff as well as students are sometimes confused by such changes and that although the college prides itself on its consultative approach, management decisions do not always reflect this.

Individual students referred to a range of other issues including: the inadequacy of a few lecturers, inconsistencies in assessment procedures and the standards expected of students, insufficient credit being given to outstanding work, lecturers being slow with students' course reports, poor communication between departments, courses which are too theoretical, and a lack of an explicitly stated policy for recognising students previous experience to allow for a shortened course. One student reiterated his view that students got out of the college what they put in, and commented:

> The main problem for the college is its poor image. The problem is that some students blame the college for their own inadequacy ... placing the blame outside instead of inside yourself. It's my responsibility and also the responsibility of the lecturers to make sure that what they offer is relevant and also to look at our needs. It's a two-way thing, not just one-sided.

Christchurch

Christchurch was the college where students indicated that there had been most improvement since their first and second year. (In their first year Christchurch students, compared with those in the other two colleges, had been the most critical.) When we opened the interview by asking students to give an overall impression of the college, more than half immediately commented on improvements in the third year which they regarded as '...certainly the best of the three years'. This was largely because students had a greater choice of courses and these were more practical and geared towards the classroom.

About a quarter of the students, however, continued to be 'lukewarm' or critical of their third-year experience. There were complaints about poor organisation, 'boredom', a lack of 'any sense of togetherness', and B.Ed. students who felt the four-year course dragged.

☐ What the College Does Well

In line with their overall reaction to the third-year college experience, when asked what the college does well, almost all the students interviewed referred to the quality of the lecturers and the improvement in courses compared with the first two years. In the words of the students:

> The lecturing staff is much improved - new staff with recent experience in the field.
>
> The quality of the teaching staff - some of them are really incredible. They're really good role models and the stuff that they give us is practical and interesting and facilities are there to use once you have found out where they are - just a pity it takes so long. They give a good basic grounding by the time you've finished if you are willing to take it.
>
> Most of the courses are really good. The tutors taking them are really geared up to give you what you actually want this year with regard to resources and what you're going to expect next year - they are really preparing you for next year and everything is more relevant.

☐ What the College Does Poorly

Students were less critical than in previous years, but the main area of complaint was still college organisation, administration and poor basic communication. For some the problem was initial course enrolments, for others it was timetabling, although students acknowledged that the 9am to 3pm timetable was 'the choice of the students the year before'. There was a feeling that, although an effort was sometimes made to consult with students on, for example, the place of subject studies, student views were not necessarily 'heard'. One or two were also concerned by a 'lack of ground rules' as to who qualified for shortened courses. The only other area of criticism where more than two or three students had comments was the relationship between the college and the university, particularly the requirement to arrange a university course outside the 9am to 3pm college hours. Students said that although the college initially encouraged students to take university courses, they now found it hard to 'mix teachers' college and university'.

The lack of corporate feeling in the college was again referred to, as it had been in the first and second years:

> The college is just the faces of the lecturers to me in a way. You don't know any of the top people, unless you have to get something done and then it takes ages and ages and they're really inaccessible and they're usually very busy.

The College Courses

Third-year Interviews

In each year's interviews we have asked the students to complete a pre-interview questionnaire where they listed the various units they were taking as part of the college course. As in previous years, the three colleges organise their course of studies in different ways.

In the first two years we asked the students a set series of questions about their reactions to the units they were taking. Because of the range and different combinations of courses taken by students it was hard to make comparative judgements about their experiences. We did, however, gather a good deal of material which we shared with staff. We also summarised the reasons why students found some courses helpful and others less so (see *Windows on Teacher Education, Phase 1*, p. 105 and *Phase 2*, pp. 23-24).

In the third year we simply asked the students to tell us something about how they found each of the courses they were taking. Usually this was enough to set them talking. Where necessary we probed to find about about such aspects as the relevance of the course for the classroom, the value for the student's own personal development, the lecturer's teaching method and comparisons with courses in the same subject in the first and second years.

As with previous years, students were taking a wide range of courses, but because fewer were compulsory in the third year, the number of students in our interview sample taking individual courses was necessarily limited; sometimes as few as three or four were taking a particular course. For this reason, we cannot make detailed comments about student reaction to individual courses. In general, the issues raised by students affirmed those they had mentioned in previous years. Three factors stood out clearly:

- the overwhelming importance of the quality of individual lecturers - their personality, lecturing style and knowledge of current classroom practices
- the need, particularly in the third year, for students to see clear links between course content and classroom practice. Students also appreciate courses which enable them to develop classroom resources. (There is a potential problem here, however, because students do not know the level at which they are going to be teaching. They may spend time making resources they will never use.)
- the need for courses to be pitched at the right level for students, taking into account individual skills and previous experience, as well as course content of other college courses already taken by students.

Students in their third year value courses which focus on classroom practice but they also appreciate those which contribute to their own personal development, particularly the ones that enable them to improve either their interpersonal skills or their skills in a particular subject, such as music or art.

The following are examples of the range of students' comments, both positive and negative. It is impossible, with qualitative data of this kind, to quantify the responses, but for all colleges positive comments considerably outnumbered the negative. One reason for this is that many students, although critical of the college programme, tended to find the content of third-year courses an improvement on those in the first and second years. This was particularly so in Wellington and Christchurch, where there were few negative comments about course content or the way third-year courses were taught.

Positive comments:

> Art is a very personal course this year. It's just you painting. You don't have any involvement with children - it's like the development of your own art. I'm finding it really good because I know when I go teaching, I won't have any time for my own art, so I'm really enjoying it. That's why I'm taking the art teaching course in the second semester because that is art with children. You go out into schools and do art programmes. I'm an art major so this course suits me. The lecturer is an artist and we can all relate to that... he gave us a talk on his own art, so we can see where he's coming from. It's really good. He's a really neat guy. (Auckland)
>
> I loved computer studies. It's very, very, very good instruction. Very competent lecturers. We had a lot of fun and covered a lot of stuff. I would make an exceptional recommendation for it to be compulsory. The course coverage is great and very applicable for the classroom. (Auckland)
>
> Education this year has been a lot better. We've been looking at dealing with the individual child - mainstreaming, and various other issues which we do need to look specifically at. I've found the course this year to be very good as far as that is concerned. The information is there. We've had a lot of visitors come in and talk to us. It's been excellent. I've really enjoyed it so far. The lecturer I've had this year has been a lot easier to talk with and the delivery's been a lot better too. (Auckland)

Maths is my first semester option. It's one of my most favourite, if not my favourite, option. I'm not very strong in maths, but after doing this course, which is maths at intermediate level, it's great. We've spent two or three lessons just workshopping and photocopying as much as we can get. The course really teaches you how to have fun with maths and I'm trying to pick up another maths course like it next semester. It's an excellent course. (Auckland)

I've really felt exceptionally intimidated in any Maori Studies courses that I've taken. We had a new lecturer this year and she was fantastic. She was straight from the intermediate school. She didn't intimidate me or patronise me if I didn't know what she was asking. We made lots of fantastic resources. It was a really good course. (Wellington)

Science 300 was a good course, mainly for the same reasons as maths. It was appropriate to what actually happens in the school. We wrote units and had lots of assignments or lots of time in class doing things that you do with children. That was a really good course. (Wellington)

Professional Studies 300, 330 and 342. I think they are all really good - excellent. They're quite practical in what they're teaching and about things that are going on in the classroom. The lecturers know about what's going on. They're clued up and know what they are talking about. All professional studies courses here are really good. (Wellington)

Science is really good actually. That's not a very strong point of mine. I found in the first year we had only six weeks to learn hardly anything but this year our other lecturer, she's really great, so there's lots of experiments and hands on - like we do in the classrooms - just doing things that children would do, things that you can help the children with, and ways of learning - you don't have to know all the answers. You can do experiments and let the children come up with answers that way. (Christchurch)

Senior reading was a really good course. It was resource based and sharing ideas with other people on the course, and it was well planned. We knew from day one what was expected of us so we could go ahead with that and plan. Yes, it was good. We covered quite a bit. It was a good length, that course. (Christchurch)

The multicultural classroom was one of the best courses. It was really well planned and the tutor was thoroughly organised and we knew what we were doing. The ideas and resources that we came away with were just amazing. But most of it was our own input. We didn't just get photocopied sheets every five minutes. So you came away feeling you'd actually achieved something. (Christchurch)

Negative comments:

Education is compulsory. If I had a choice I wouldn't take it. That's one class which everyone seems to feel the same about. There's a lot of waffling going on. We

Education is compulsory. If I had a choice I wouldn't take it. That's one class which everyone seems to feel the same about. There's a lot of waffling going on. We spend so much time sitting around in groups just discussing and I mean we don't discuss the topics because a lot of it is common sense, what you would do with some of these children. It's just a big time waster to me. (Auckland)

I thought I'd do 100 hours of social studies this year because I'm really interested in social studies as a people's learning forum but I'm afraid I've been really disappointed in our lecturer. I sound like an old grump, eh? I do love it here at college, but I just feel that the courses are just not substantial enough to offer us what we need. Social studies - he's giving us notes and the basic ideas which is good. We can probably learn from that, but as far as practical experience is concerned, I'm really disappointed in that. There are two other social studies classes going at the same time as mine and the things that they come out and tell us that they do are just amazing. They're allowed to use their own minds, but we actually get pieces of paper saying, "You will do this, then this, and then this". (Auckland)

Social Studies 150 which is studies of cultures. That was to complete a social studies requirement and it was a waste of time. I'm not that keen on the social studies department here, I won't say that too loud. It wasn't really very interesting. She expected us to do a lot of it ourselves and a lot of people were in there because they needed the half unit, not because they wanted to be there and so it was hard to be very motivated about what we were going to do. The lecturer had this idea of what we could do and we started collecting things to make a wall display but she forgot about it and she never gave us the time to make the display when a lot of us had spent quite a lot of time collecting things. That was a bit frustrating. (Wellington)

English as a second language would probably be my least favourite course. We haven't done anything constructive yet. We've just listened to the tutor waffle on and the lessons aren't really planned. She's not quite sure what she's doing, but it's the only course that you could go into and click off quite early in the piece. It doesn't seem very relevant but we had to take two tagged courses with a multicultural approach to education so I took English as a second language. (Christchurch)

Ed media - I suppose that's a personal hate because I can't stand technology. I have a real thing against computers. I suppose it's just a personal fear of them, so I find it very threatening and I'd rather not have anything to do with it. A lot of it is my own personal attitude but I feel too that we had an assignment to do and most of us had difficulty. We'd been given the basic outline for it and we knew how to operate the disks but there were a lot of loopholes that we weren't prepared for that we fell into. It wasn't until after the course had finished that they realised that we didn't have enough background and showed us all where we went wrong and what we could have done which was really frustrating. I think they presumed a bit much in their enthusiasm for their own topic. For people who are switched on to computers, they're fine, but I haven't got that sort of aptitude at all so I find them very intimidating and it was hard to cope in that way. (Christchurch)

The Questionnaire

As well as discussing college courses with the students who were interviewed, those who filled in a questionnaire were asked about the courses they had taken while they were at the college.[1]

Courses Students Regret Not Having Taken

First, students were asked: *Now that you have nearly completed your training, are there any courses offered by the college that you regret not having taken?* Overall, almost two-thirds of the students (63%) said that there were.

In each of the colleges some students referred to subjects in a general sense, for example 'more art courses'. Others mentioned specific courses, which tended to be third-year courses. This was no doubt because these were fresh in the students' minds but it may also reflect the fact that, particularly in Christchurch, they had more choice of courses in their third year.

It would be dangerous to attempt comparisons across colleges because of the different ways colleges organise their courses. Obviously, if a college offers more optional courses, there are more options a student may regret not having taken. Wellington students certainly have a wider range of courses from which to choose, particularly in their first and second year. Nor would it be wise to make comparisons between departments within colleges because of the varying size of departments, the range and numbers of courses offered within departments and the proportion of courses which are optional. For example, the fact that no Auckland students indicated that there were any courses in the education department which they now wish they had taken may be because most of these courses are compulsory rather than a comment on the quality of courses. Some general comments can, however, be made.

In Auckland the majority of the students' 'regrets' clustered around a few courses or were within three or four departments. The curriculum area which stood out most clearly was computers in education, mentioned by 45 students. Other curriculum areas mentioned by more than 20 students were: music courses (31), physical education (28), mathematics courses (25), reading (22).

In Wellington, where students probably have the greatest degree of choice, students tended to be idiosyncratic in their responses - more than 40 different courses were referred to, about half of them by only one student. In most other cases particular courses were referred to by only two or three students. The exceptions were two professional studies courses: PS286/386 Teaching minority group children and children for whom English is not their first language (13 students), and PS480 Teaching children with reading difficulties (eight students). Two courses referred to by five students each were: computer courses and PS268 Teaching children with sensory impairment in regular classes. It is interesting to note the emphasis placed on courses where the content concerned children with special needs or abilities.

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[1] Complete lists by college of the courses students regret not having taken, optional courses which students think should have been compulsory and the most useful courses have been sent to the colleges.

In Christchurch, 29 different courses were referred to by those students who now regretted not having taken various courses. With the exception of five references to courses in both the Maori and the music departments, other courses were usually referred to by only two or three students and sometimes only one.

Optional Courses Which Students Think Should Have Been Compulsory

Students were next asked if there were any optional or selected courses they had taken which they think should have been compulsory. Overall, more than two-thirds of the students (65%) thought there were.

Auckland
As with the previous question, there was a range of student responses. Two courses or topics stood out clearly ahead of others. These were a view that computer courses should be compulsory (49 students) and that more mathematics courses should be compulsory (46 students). In both cases these figures represent about a quarter of the students who completed a questionnaire. Other courses where more than 10 students indicated that courses should be compulsory were teaching English as a second language or English in multicultural classrooms (15 students), Maori courses (14 students), reading courses (12 students) and physical education courses (12 students).

Wellington
Two courses stand out for Wellington students. These are PS480 Teaching children with reading difficulties (19 students) and PS286-386 Teaching minority group children and children for whom English is not their first language (14 students). These were followed by PS267 Mainstreaming (eight students) and HE350 Working with parents (seven students). Most other courses mentioned were referred to by only two or three students.

Christchurch
When Christchurch students were asked if there were any optional courses which they thought should have been compulsory, proportionately fewer than at Auckland or Wellington thought so. This may reflect the fact that Christchurch students have fewer course choices, particularly in the first two years. No course stands out in the student responses. Apart from a course in first aid, which five students said should be compulsory, and a course on interpersonal skills and communication and another on evaluation in the classroom, both of which four students thought should be compulsory, all other references to courses were made by only one or two students. The course on evaluation in the classroom has since been made a compulsory course in year two.

Most Useful Courses

Students were asked to indicate which *three* of all the courses they had taken during their time at college they thought they would find most useful as classroom teachers. Some students referred to individual courses, others merely to departments. Students were asked about courses which they had taken during any of their three years at college, but where they referred to specific courses these tended to be courses taken in their third year.

Auckland

Three departments stand out clearly - mathematics, reading and language. There were 122 references to mathematics courses in the students' responses, 119 to reading and 116 to language.

Next in terms of number of student responses were physical education (69), music education (38), education (37), social and cultural education (33) and science education (31). As departments are of different sizes and the number of courses offered varies considerably from department to department, not too much should be read into the comparison of these raw totals. It is clear, however, that students perceive courses taken within the mathematics and language departments (including reading) to be of prime importance to them as future classroom teachers.

Wellington

The professional studies department in Wellington is much larger than any other department and runs many more courses. It is not surprising, therefore, that the majority of the courses students consider will be most useful to them in the classroom are courses they have taken within this department. Students made 124 references to courses within the professional studies department. Of these, PS300 Programme implementation, was the one referred to by the largest number of students (31), followed by PS330 Implementing the balanced reading programme (20) and PS342 Implementing language in the classroom (16). Where courses in other departments were referred to, 10 or fewer students did so; in most cases only one or two students referred to any single course.

Christchurch

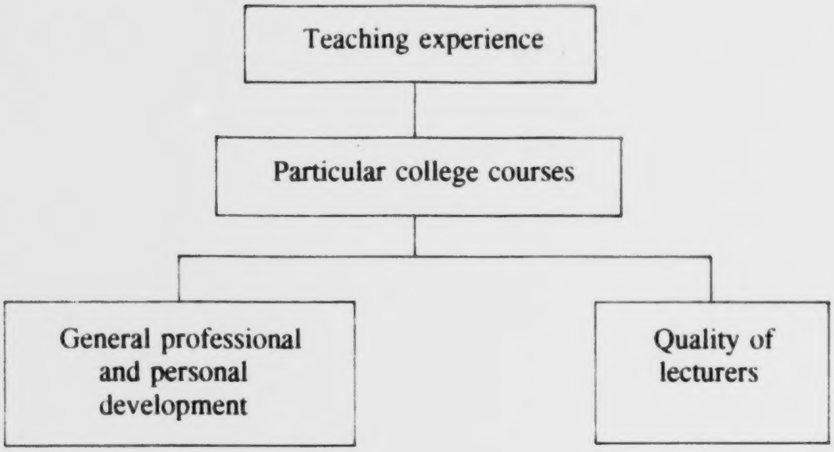
There was a wide range of student responses in Christchurch. The department which had the largest number of student responses was education studies (36). As this is the biggest department, this is not surprising. Also, staff in this department say that, in mounting their courses, they have been particularly attentive to student needs and market demands. The curriculum area with the largest number of student responses was reading (26). The single course mentioned by the largest number of students was READ301 Reading programme in the junior school, but even this was referred to by only eight students, followed by EDCN319 Evaluation in the classroom, referred to by seven students. In the majority of cases, most courses referred to were mentioned by only two or three students and in many cases only one student selected a course as being one of the three s/he thought would be most useful in the classroom.

Most Useful Parts of Training

Students were asked: *What have been the most useful parts of your training and total college experience for your career as a teacher?* Students could make up to three comments.

In total, the 289 students made 525 responses. The students' responses are summarised diagrammatically in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Most Useful Parts of Training


Teaching experience
Particular college courses
General professional and personal development
Quality of lecturers

Teaching Experience

As one would expect, the majority of students believe that one of the most useful parts of their training is their teaching experience in classrooms. Overall, about three-quarters of the students said this was the case, with nearly 90% of Christchurch students believing this was so. Many students simply wrote 'teaching experience'. For those who were more specific, the main benefits of teaching practice are twofold. Students can put into practice ideas they have gained from college courses (theory into practice); and they can also gain further ideas from practising teachers. The weighting given to these two aspects varies from student to student. There are those who think that 'Teaching experience is the *most* beneficial part of the course, where you learn the most thorough advice from the teacher and observation of the teacher'. There are others who value teaching practice but acknowledge that they would not have been able to achieve what they did in the classroom, '...without college courses, for example curriculum courses in reading and maths'. Other comments made by students included the importance of:

- the experience gained of teaching children at all levels of the primary school
- having an opportunity to spend time in a range of schools, for example, inner city, multicultural, with children from a range of socio-economic backgrounds
- full control (but support available if needed)
- experience in setting up classroom programmes and teaching particular subjects
- the opportunity to observe a range of teaching styles, including those students would not wish to emulate
- the opportunity to be immersed in a school environment.

Particular College Courses

Next in importance are particular college courses referred to in just over half the students' responses - rather more in Christchurch. Where students mentioned specific courses as being particularly useful, in Auckland these were likely to be reading and language courses (19 students), physical education courses (14 students) or various education courses, particularly child development and special needs (eight students) and organisation and management planning (eight students). In Wellington students were most likely to refer to professional studies courses (15 students) or reading and language courses (13 students). In Christchurch students were most likely to refer to third-year professional studies (14 students) or education courses (nine students). A complete list of those courses referred to by students by college including the number of students who referred to them has been sent to the colleges.

General Professional and Personal Development

As well as referring to specific courses, students referred to aspects of their professional and personal development. It was not clear from the comments whether they thought this development had taken place because of college courses or teaching experience, or a mixture of both, but it is likely that many comments refer to skills students believe they have acquired through college courses. There were five broad categories of comments:

* development of their personal philosophy of teaching
* knowledge of the primary school curriculum and syllabuses
* the development of classroom management techniques
* planning classroom programmes - including objectives, lesson sequences and evaluations
* child development.

Students also referred to the facilities available for developing classroom resources. The students' professional and personal development has taken place in an environment where students have been exposed to a wider range of people and ideas than they have previously experienced. Students commented on having to confront new ideas and having their own views challenged. The college programme has helped develop their awareness of individual differences, tolerance for others and their own self-confidence in coping with new situations. For a number of students, the friendships they have made with other students and mutual support have been particularly important.

Quality of Individual Lecturers

Finally, about 10% of the students referred to the quality of individual lecturers and their knowledge and experience of teaching. The best were described as 'inspiring', 'enthusiastic', 'stimulating' and 'well-prepared'.

Mary believes the third year of training is particularly important for students because they are anxious to cover as much ground as they can before they leave the college. This heightens student awareness of any inadequacies in the college programme. However, she thinks the third-year courses are more relevant than those in the first and second years, and wonders why more of the material was not introduced earlier. She is particularly pleased with the course she is doing on English as a second language. Mary became aware of the need for such a course when she was on teaching experience and saw an associate struggling with non-English-speaking children. Mary gave some of the course material to one of her associates and it's been very useful already. Mary did maths to 7th form level and has taken maths as a subject study through her college course. She has enjoyed the practical, hands-on assignments in the third year. Now that she has nearly completed her training, she regrets not having taken the course on beginning school mathematics. She's also very pleased with the resources she's made in the maths course on teaching in the middle school. Social studies is another very practical course. The course Mary is taking about integrated language programmes, on the other hand, is much more lecture orientated and, without a set class to plan for, Mary said it did not have the same impact. The three courses Mary thinks will be most useful in terms of her future experience as a classroom teacher are teaching in the middle school, the reading courses and those in science. Reading, mathematics and science are the subjects Mary is also most looking forward to teaching and those she feels most confident to assess.

In terms of her own professional development, Mary feels the training has certainly opened her eyes to just what is involved in teaching a class of children - the problems and the hard work. She is also much more aware of the effect of home and social background on children. She still feels that people either have the qualities to be a teacher or not, and that unless students have a real liking for children and want to help people learn, the college cannot turn them into teachers. She certainly thinks the college course is necessary to prepare students for the classroom. She had had work experience in a classroom before she was accepted for college but she found that then she concentrated on looking at the children. She did not get any real insight into the teacher's management skills. She thinks the college assignments which students do while they are on section do help them to look more deeply at important classroom issues. The curriculum courses she has taken at college have certainly been necessary to prepare her for the primary classroom and the knowledge she has developed of an integrated approach to teaching. Her views on how children learn have 'chopped and changed' during the three years, partly because of the differing views of individual lecturers but now that she is having to write her philosophy of education she has to clarify her own ideas and they are 'beginning to settle'. She is pleased with the emphasis on long-term planning in the third year but she thinks it would have been beneficial earlier and has been 'a bit slow coming'. With six months of the course left to run she feels a bit insecure about actually having her own class to teach. Nothing particular stands out, it's just that she is aware that there is a lot involved in setting up a class and planning for a year.

Mary is very conscious of her accountability to the parents of the children she will be teaching. All classroom planning and other decisions about children made by a teacher have to be justified to the parents who have the right to look in and say, 'Why have you done this or that? 'Why have you put my child here?' Mary thinks it's important for teachers to have good relationships with parents and to keep them informed about what is going on in the classroom. She would not like to have parents in the classroom all the time but she thinks there is a place for them helping with, for example, reading from time to time, and going on visits. She thinks parents need to know the things that are going well for their children as well as to be informed about any problems. Open communication between parents and the school is very important. Mary is confident that she will be able to justify her own classroom programme and philosophy to parents.

When we asked Mary about the links between the college course and teaching practice, she said she thinks there is 'a distinct difference between section and college and it doesn't overlap a lot'. She really sees being on section and college work as 'two separate things', although she acknowledges that the assignments students are required to do on section in the third year are much more relevant to student needs than before. However, she does not think she ever saw in schools practices which were 'in advance' of those advocated by lecturers.

There is quite a list of subjects which Mary says she has had little experience of teaching in the classroom: oral language, Maori, computers in the classroom, music, drama, science, social studies, health and education outside the classroom. Mary has little experience of teaching computers in the classroom but she is confident that she will be able to use computers to assist children's learning. These are also curriculum areas which Mary has seldom seen taught in the classroom and two of them, drama and education outside the classroom, she has never seen taught. Music is the subject about which she feels the least confident as far as curriculum content is concerned. Mary feels confident about running an integrated programme in her own class. This is an approach she has regularly observed in schools although she has seldom had the opportunity to teach such a programme herself.

We discussed the various 'equity' issues with Mary. She thinks it would be impossible to have attended college for three years and for student views not to have been broadened. For herself, she thinks her experiences, particularly in schools, have 'developed' rather than changed her views. Her awareness of issues to do with socio-economic status has probably been most influenced, particularly the increasing hardship now experienced by some families.

Mary says she is developing confidence in assessing children's work and that there is quite an emphasis on this topic this year. Once again, she believes it is something that should have been stressed from the beginning of the course. Assessing children's needs so that future work can be set is so important that students need to start developing the skills early on.

Mary is still critical of the colleges' methods of assessing students. She thinks the system of pass/fail does not distinguish between students and is particularly inappropriate when future employers will be trying to select the best-qualified students for classroom positions. She thinks the fact that future employers will be looking at student marks has motivated her to improve her own performance. The student profiles written at the end of the course by tutors will be influential and are based partly on comments made by associate teachers, which means that Mary always strives to get good comments and 'ticks in the right place'. Mary is unsure as to whether her final college report or profile accurately reflects her own performance as a student but she does think it will be helpful in getting her a job.

Mary thinks the length of the college course has been about right for her but she thought the workload in year one was insufficient. She is more motivated to be a classroom teacher than when she began the course and feels adequately prepared for the classroom. Primary teaching is still her first choice of a career and, apart from breaks for personal reasons, she expects to make a lifelong career in education. Her immediate concern is to make a success of a class of her own but in future years she intends to take some Advanced Studies for Teachers courses. She also expects to complete a degree sometime in the future, but she is unsure when.

STUDENT PROFILE 2

Rose is quite happy with the college but has had enough now and is ready to go out. She found that after her 'sole charge' experience in schools, when she had periods of full control, she would like to run a class of her own and lead 'a normal sort of life'. Student life is only a process towards having a permanent job. She's tried not to be too downhearted about having to come back into college after her final section. She is going to spend the last six months of the course collecting as many resources as she can because she realises that once she becomes a teacher she'll be tied to a class and have less time to update her professional skills and theory.

She thinks the main problem with the college is the image it has built up. She doesn't know if that is the college's fault or not. She thinks some students blame the college for their own inadequacies instead of looking critically at themselves. Preparation for teaching is a two-way process. It is over to the lecturers to be aware of student needs and to make sure they offer courses which are relevant. But it is also the responsibility of the student to take advantage of what the college offers. Rose thinks it is important that students do not run down the college, particularly now that the college will be competing for students with other colleges. She intends to project a positive image of the college through her own confidence in her teaching skills.

Rose thinks the college has been particularly good at preparing students for all curriculum areas. Courses are available in all subjects and it is the students' responsibility to select those that will be most beneficial to them as teachers.

Rose is pleased with the content of most third-year courses. She felt the maths course was too short to allow for full coverage of the intended content. The lecturer concentrated on professional ways of teaching maths but some students needed more emphasis on the content of the maths syllabus. Staff and timetable changes contributed to the inadequacy of the length of the course. The course was for six weeks, which for some courses seems too long because time just drags but Rose gets really involved with maths, which is a subject she enjoys, so she found the course was not long enough. She was excited by the social studies course about educational issues because it was well taught and the research she undertook on the attitudes of boys and girls to maths was of particular interest to her. The course has already been of practical use to her on her sole charge section. She wasn't very motivated to do the compulsory science course and was disappointed that some of the content overlapped with that covered the previous year. Rose had enjoyed science in the first two years and feels quite confident about teaching it.

Rose also had a problem with overlap in the professional studies course she did on mainstreaming. Maybe it was her own fault for not reading the course contents in the calendar carefully enough but she felt she wasted her time because it was equivalent to a course she had taken in her first year. Rose couldn't change to another course because the one she chose was a requirement to fulfil the number of units she had to take as a major. The compulsory reading course was relevant to the classroom, as was the one on reading difficulties. Rose was going to be doing a research-based course on gender equity in the second half of the year. She was really looking forward to that because she likes going out into schools to do research. Rose was pleased to have a music course to 'wind down the week on Friday'. As well as being helpful for the classroom, music is 'good for the soul'. She was able to make use of her singing in the college chorus on teaching section. The first aid course she regards as 'skills plus common sense', and very necessary for the classroom. Rose took three optional courses which she thinks should have been compulsory: Working with parents, Women and girls in education and Teaching swimming. The three courses she thinks will be most useful for her as a classroom teacher are the third-year mathematics course, Women and girls in education and Teaching minority group children for whom English is a second language. Rose had only a few words of Maori when she arrived at college but has taken every opportunity to learn and increase her knowledge of te reo me nga tikanga Maori.

Rose is reasonably confident in assessing children's progress in the classroom although she would like more experience at assessing children's physical education and health. She thinks the assessments she has received herself have helped her improve her own performance although this is not the case if lecturers just 'beat around the bush and say nice things'.

In terms of her professional development, Rose feels that her experience since she came to college demonstrates the maxim, 'a little knowledge is a dangerous thing'. Having been at college for three years she finds that the more she learns the more she knows she does not know much. Rose is ready to go out into schools because she thinks she is well prepared and that is to her own credit and to the college. In her words she has 'enough to let me inside a classroom plus a willingness to be open to learn from my own mistakes when I'm confronted with the reality of the classroom.' The college has done well in providing her with the theory. It is up to her to try and put it into practice. There are many specific things that Rose has learnt through being at college: monitoring children, running a class programme, management skills and teaching maths and reading - two subjects she is particularly looking forward to teaching. Rose also thinks these are two subjects where a teacher's professional skills are particularly important because so much is involved in running ability groups and being able to evaluate children's progress in terms of your objectives. Rose has learnt a lot about what children need to learn and how they go about learning. She found the psychology paper she did at university of great help in terms of her knowledge of child development. Her own reading and various college courses have also helped her to develop some knowledge of how children grow and learn. She is, however, not particularly confident abut providing individualised programmes for children.

Rose respects parents' rights and is quite comfortable about her relationships with the parents of the children she will be teaching. She thinks parents have a responsibility to help their children at home. Rose thinks she will be comfortable about having parents help in the classroom with things like reading and maths but as she has not had experience of that yet she won't be sure until she has tried. There were parents in the classroom during Rose's first teaching experience but not on any others. Rose is looking forward to talking to parents about their children. She appreciates parents' enthusiasm for their own children and their wanting to know about their children's progress. She think she has been well prepared for her role with parents because of a special course she took while she was at college. As part of this course, Rose had a chance once again to do some of her own research by interviewing parents about their expectations of the school. That was a really good experience.

Rose is not sure about the co-ordination of the college course with teaching practice. She thinks there is a problem with some teachers being a bit out of date. The content of the syllabuses is the same in college and in the schools but the teaching methods used by teachers are not always those advocated by the college. There's also a question of mental attitude. Rose focuses on a child-centred model of children learning, but some teachers she regards as old-fashioned. There are quite a few gaps in the areas of the curriculum which Rose has seen taught in schools. She found that usually she was the one who taught music, science, social studies, physical education and Maori. She's not saying teachers never teach these subjects, although she certainly has no experience of any teacher teaching Maori, but as these were areas where she wished to teach, the teachers tended to hand these subjects over to her. There was sometimes a problem fitting college units of work in with those being covered by children in the classroom. Sometimes she had to concentrate on social studies, for example, and forget about science, or vice versa. Rose is looking forward to teaching most subjects apart from art, health and computers in the classroom. Art, health and education outside the classroom are three subjects she has not seen taught in schools during her time at college. She has had a chance to observe and teach an integrated curriculum programme on all her teaching sections and feels confident about running an integrated programme in her own classroom.

When we discussed equity issues, Rose said that her views had changed since she had been at college. For example, when we had asked her on entry to college whether sexism or racism were issues in New Zealand primary schools, she had said they were not. This may be because she did not have her own primary schooling in New Zealand. Now, she is very aware of sexism in classrooms, particularly the ways by which the 'stupid, overpowering, showing-off' behaviour of boys disadvantages the girls from their learning in, for example, physical education, science and maths. She was so bothered about the ways boys dominated games in physical education that she took time to demonstrate to boys, by way of blackboard diagrams, how unfair their behaviour was in terms of their ball contact compared with the girls. Rose was also upset by an example of racist behaviour she observed in a school when a pupil from Vietnam and one from Samoa attacked each other. Rose feels quite comfortable in the classroom herself although she thinks others may be prejudiced. She thinks that as long as she is confident and peaceful in herself she will be all right. She will prepare herself to counter prejudice and as she says, 'Whether it kills me, I'm willing to be patient!'

Rose is not sure about her position on biculturalism. She regards New Zealand as a multicultural society. She has a very broad experience of different cultures herself, being able to speak five languages. She thinks it is important for children to know about their own culture and language and she certainly thinks Maori children should learn the Maori language - it's part of themselves, their identity and necessary for their survival. As for non-Maori children, the important thing is that they learn about their own culture and language first. On the other hand she acknowledges the importance of the treaty for New Zealanders, and the rights of both Maori and Pakeha.

Rose felt that the course was too long for her. Two years would have been sufficient.

A particular problem was the light workload in the first year. The main suggestions she has for changes to the course of training are a shorter course, a review of some lecturers and more effective and realistic methods of evaluating students.

Rose says she rather drifted into teaching but she is now very confident of her ability in the classroom. She feels very well prepared to teach at all levels of the primary school but she does not think she has been well prepared to deal with mainstreamed children or to teach in rural schools. She would most like to teach five- to seven-year-olds. She expects she will be in a primary classroom in five years' time although she would also like to travel overseas.

Rose thinks the whole training experience has been important so that nothing stands out as a 'key event'.

THE CURRICULUM

Curriculum Areas Most and Least Looked Forward To

When we had first surveyed our cohort of students *before* they began their courses of training we asked them:

- Which three curriculum areas they were *most* looking forward to teaching.
- Which three curriculum areas they were *least* looking forward to teaching.

When we surveyed students at the end of their courses of training we asked the same questions. Tables 2, 3 and 4 summarise the student responses at the end of training. In Tables 2 and 3 the responses are ranked according to the areas students are *most* or *least* looking forward to. In Table 4 the curriculum areas are grouped according to like subjects.

Table 2

Student Attitudes Towards Various Curriculum Areas: those they were most looking forward to at the end of their training (ranked)

Curriculum areas *most* looked forward to	N of responses	% of students (N=289)
Reading	156	54
Physical education	152	53
Written language	139	48
Art	138	48
Education outside the classroom	120	42
Mathematics	110	38
Science	106	37
Social studies	105	36
Music	100	35
Oral language	102	35
Health	80	28
Drama	68	24
Maori	67	23
Computers in the classroom	56	19
All responses	1499	

NOTE: These three tables are based upon the responses of all 289 students. Students could tick any one of 14 options.

Table 3

Student Attitudes Towards Various Curriculum Areas: those they were least looking forward to at the end of their training (ranked)

Curriculum areas *least* looked forward to	No of responses	% of students (N=289)
Computers in the classroom	127	44
Maori	121	42
Music	100	35
Drama	88	30
Mathematics	77	27
Science	59	20
Social studies	45	16
Health	40	14
Art	31	11
Physical education	24	8
Reading	23	8
Education outside the classroom (EOTC)	21	7
Oral language	15	5
Written language	13	4
Total responses	784	

Table 4

Student Attitudes Towards Various Curriculum Areas at the End of Their Training: subject groupings

	Most looked forward to		Least looked forward to	
Curriculum areas	No responses	% of students (N=289)	N of responses	% of students (N=289)
Language:				
Written language	139	48	13	4
Oral language	102	35	15	5
Reading	156	54	23	8
Mathematics and science:				
Mathematics	110	38	77	27
Science	106	37	59	20
Computers in the classroom	56	19	127	44
Arts:				
Music	100	35	100	35
Art	138	48	31	11
Drama	68	24	88	30
Social studies:				
Social studies	105	36	45	16
Maori	67	23	121	42
Health:				
Health	80	28	40	14
Physical education	152	53	24	8
Education outside the classroom (EOTC)	120	42	21	7
Total responses	1499		784	

COMMENTS ON TABLES 2, 3 and 4

* Students were given the opportunity to list up to three curriculum areas in each instance. Students may well be looking forward to teaching more than three curriculum areas. The reverse is also true. There was, however, a tendency for students to list three curriculum areas which they were *most* looking forward to teaching and only one or two they were *least* looking forward to teaching. Overall, students ticked more curriculum areas as being areas they were *most* looking forward to compared with those they were *least* looking forward to (1499 responses compared with 784 responses).

* Similarly, a higher percentage of students referred to the areas they were *most* looking forward to compared with those they were *least* looking forward to. For example, reading, the subject that tops the list of preferred curriculum areas, was referred to by more than half of the students (54%), whereas computers in the classroom, the area which topped the list of those curriculum areas *least* looked forward to, was referred to by less than half of the students (44%).

* The curriculum areas have been ranked according to the percentage of students who said they were either looking forward to teaching, or *not* looking forward to teaching, a particular subject. However, the responses tended to cluster around groups of subjects and the differences in responses were often not great. For example, although reading heads the list with 54% of students saying they were most looking forward to teaching the subject, the percentage is not much higher than that for physical education (53%), or written language and art (both at 48%). There was also little to distinguish between education outside the classroom (42%), mathematics (38%), science (37%), social studies (36%), music (35%) and oral language (35%). Similar clustering of responses is apparent in those curriculum areas students are *least* looking forward to teaching.

* Although there is a tendency in some cases for subjects low on the list of most looked forward to options to be high on the list of least looked forward to options (for example, computers in the classroom), the two lists are not mirror images of each other.

* Music is an example of a subject where an equal number of students say they are either looking forward or *not* looking forward to teaching (35% in both cases).

* There were some variations by college, but the only case which proved to be statistically significant was the teaching of reading. Proportionately more Christchurch students than those at Auckland or Wellington said they were looking forward to teaching the subject ($\chi^2 = 12.302$).

* There were also some gender differences; male students were looking forward to teaching science and computers more than female students ($\chi^2 = 4.191$ and $\chi^2 = 6.153$ respectively).

Comparisons with Information Collected from Students on Entry to College areas which students *most* look forward to teaching on the one hand and *least* look forward to teaching on the other. They include data collected from students on entry to college and at the end of training. It is important to note, however, that the group of students surveyed at the end of their training differs in one important respect from those surveyed when they entered college. The first group included two-year graduate trainees and students enrolling to do a four-year B.Ed. course. Neither of these groups of students were final-year students in 1991 so did not complete the questionnaire. When we do further longitudinal analysis for our next report we will be able to track changes in attitudes within groups of students.

Table 5

Curriculum Areas Most Looked Forward To: ranked

On entry to college	% of students (N=549)	At end of training	% of students (N=289)
1. Physical education	46	Reading	54
2. Reading	39	Physical education	53
3. Social studies	35	Written language	48
4. Art	33	Art	48
		Education outside the classroom	42
5. Written language	29	Mathematics	38
6. Drama	27	Science	37
7. Maori culture/language	24	Social studies	36
8. Mathematics	24	Music	35
9. Music	24	Oral language	35
10. Oral language	21	Health	28
11. Science	20	Drama	24
12. Health	16	Maori	23
13. Computer studies	13	Computers in the classroom	19

Table 6

Curriculum Areas Least Looked Forward To: ranked

On entry to college	% of students (N=549)	At end of training	% of students (N=289)
1. Mathematics	35	Computers in the classroom	44
2. Computer studies	35	Maori	42
3. Science	27	Music	35
4. Music	21	Drama	30
5. Drama	19	Mathematics	27
6. Maori culture/language	19	Science	20
7. Art	16	Social studies	16
8. Physical education	12	Health	14
9. Health	10	Art	11
10. Social studies	9	Physical education	8
11. Written language	8	Reading	8
		Education outside the classroom	7
12. Oral language	6	Oral language	5
13. Reading	4	Written language	4

COMMENTS ON TABLES 5 and 6

- Education outside the classroom (EOTC) was not included in the question when it was asked of students entering the college.
- The wording of two curriculum areas was changed slightly between the two surveys but we do not believe this will have materially altered the results. On entry to college the label 'Maori culture/language' was used, compared with simply 'Maori' at the end of the course. Similarly, 'computer studies' was used on entry to college, compared with 'computers in the classroom' at the end of training.

Curriculum areas *most* looked forward to:

- Reading and physical education were the two curriculum areas most frequently mentioned by students entering college as being those they were *most* looking forward to teaching. These have remained the same.
- The same is true for the subject at the bottom of the *most* looked forward to list - computers in the classroom.
- With the exception of Maori (where the difference is minimal), the percentage of students saying they are looking foward to teaching each of the particular curriculum

areas listed is higher for all subjects than at entry to college.

- The subjects which the highest proportion of students at the end of their training say they are now looking forward to teaching, compared with their views on entry to college, are: written language (an increase of 19% of students), science (17%), reading (15%), art (15%), mathematics (14%) and oral language (14%).
- The percentage of students who say they are looking forward to teaching a particular subject has remained fairly consistent in three areas, namely, social studies (35% of students on entry compared with 36% at the end of the course), drama (27% compared with 24%) and Maori (24% compared with 23%).
- It has already been mentioned that education outside the classroom (EOTC) was not listed as a subject for students entering college. A relatively high proportion of students (42%) list this as one of the three subjects they are now most looking forward to teaching. If this percentage is considered along with the high proportion (53%) who list physical education as a favoured subject, it is clear that many students are looking forward to taking physical activities with children. (The two percentages are not mutually exclusive; students who referred to one subject frequently also referred to the other.)

Curriculum areas *least* looked forward to teaching:

- The rankings of curriculum areas which final-year students say they are *least* looking forward to teaching have changed considerably since they entered college. So, too, has the percentage of students referring to particular subjects.
- Computers in the classroom remains as one of the top two subjects, and oral language remains one of the bottom two.
- The three language areas - written language, oral language and reading - are three subjects where the percentages have changed very little. Fewer than 10% of students now say they are *least* looking forward to teaching in these areas.
- In six curriculum areas, the percentage of students now saying they are *least* looking forward to teaching the subjects in the classroom is less than on entry to college although in most cases the differences are not great. The most marked is mathematics. On entering college more than a third of the students (35%) said they were *least* looking forward to teaching the subject, but at the end of their training just over a quarter (27%) say this is the case. There has also been a significant movement in student attitudes towards science teaching, 27% saying they were *least* looking forward to teaching the subject on entry to college compared with 20% at the end of the college course. The percentage differences for other curriculum areas where fewer students say they are *least* looking forward to teaching a subject now than when they entered college are less marked. They are art (11% compared with 16%), physical education (8% compared with 12%), written language (4% compared with 8%) and oral language (5% compared with 6%).
- For the other curriculum areas the percentage of students who say they are *least* looking forward to teaching a particular area has actually increased since entry to college. This is most marked for Maori, with an increase of nearly a quarter of the

students (21%). Forty-two percent of students now say they are *least* looking forward to teaching Maori compared with 19% on entry to college. Other curriculum areas are: music (35% compared with 21%), drama (30% compared with 19%), computers in the classroom (44% compared with 35%), social studies (16% compared with 9%), health (14% compared with 10%) and reading (8% compared with 4%).

Students' Experience of Teaching Various Curriculum Subjects

We asked the students how often they had seen the various curriculum areas taught in schools while they were in college and how often they had had the chance to teach children the various curriculum areas. Tables 7 and 8 summarise their responses.

Table 7
Curriculum Areas Students Have Seen Taught in Schools

	Percentage of students (N=289)			
Curriculum Areas	Frequently	Regularly	Seldom	Never
Reading	77	18	4	0
Mathematics	75	18	4	1
Written language	71	21	6	1
Oral language	46	30	17	6
Physical education	43	43	12	1
Art	21	44	28	7
Social studies	15	35	39	9
Science	12	28	49	10
Music	9	37	48	4
Health	8	27	47	17
Education outside the classroom (EOTC)	4	16	42	37
Drama	3	8	53	36
Computers in the classroom	2	12	49	37
Maori	2	13	52	31

Table 8
Curriculum Areas Students Have Had a Chance to Teach in Schools

	Percentage of students (N=289)			
Curriculum Areas	Frequently	Regularly	Seldom	Never
Reading	65	27	8	0
Mathematics	58	26	15	0
Written language	51	28	17	4
Physical education	42	33	22	3
Oral language	35	27	27	10
Art	27	36	30	7
Science	16	30	39	14
Music	15	26	45	15
Social studies	12	31	38	18
Health	11	21	44	24
Education outside the classroom (EOTC)	8	18	34	38
Drama	6	12	45	36
Maori	6	8	48	38
Computers in the classroom	1	6	27	65

COMMENTS ON TABLES 7 and 8

* There is a clear connection, but no evidence of causality, between the frequency with which students have seen various subjects taught and their experience of teaching them. The five subjects most frequently seen taught in classrooms are also those the students are most likely to have taught. The same is true for the subjects students say they have 'never' seen or taught.

* The subjects students have most frequently seen taught and have taught themselves are reading, mathematics and written language, followed by oral language and physical education. If the two categories 'frequently' and 'regularly' are combined, the same pattern emerges, although oral language and physical education are reversed in order of priority, and art is added to the list of subjects students have been able to teach frequently or regularly.

* The subjects students most frequently say they have 'never' seen taught or taught themselves are computers in the classroom, education outside the classroom, drama and Maori, followed by health, science and social studies. If the two categories 'seldom' and 'never' are combined, the same pattern emerges, although music is now added ahead of social studies as one subject students have seldom or never seen taught.

* There are eight curriculum areas where more than half of the students say they have

'seldom' or 'never' had a chance to teach. These are: computers (92%), Maori (86%), drama (81%), EOTC (72%), health (68%), music (60%), social studies (56%) and science (53%).

- * We have no means of knowing the extent to which a student's own interest in a particular subject influences their likelihood of having had experience in teaching it.
- * Care needs to be taken in interpreting this data particularly overall figures because of

  i) the variation in sample size between the colleges. Auckland, having by far the largest number of students, is more closely in tune with the overall picture from the three colleges;

  ii) lack of precision of the terms 'frequently', 'regularly', 'seldom', 'never'.

With these provisos in mind it is interesting to look, by college, at differences in the frequency with which students say they have taught the various subjects. When the two categories 'frequently' and 'regularly' are combined, and those of 'seldom' and 'never', the following trends by college are apparent:

- Wellington students are more likely than those from Auckland and Christchurch to say they have had the opportunity to teach music (Auckland 38%, Wellington 55% and Christchurch 32%, $\chi^2 = 6.402$); drama (Auckland 13%, Wellington 32% and Christchurch 19%, $\chi2 = 10.244$) and science (Auckland 41%, Wellington 65% and Christchurch 56%, $\chi^2 = 9.138$).
- Auckland students are also less likely than Christchurch and Wellington students to say that they have had the chance to teach social studies (Auckland 36%, Wellington 61% and Christchurch 65%, $\chi^2 = 20.409$).

Students' Knowledge of the Content of Various Primary School Curriculum Areas

We also asked students how confident they were that they had an adequate knowledge of the content of various primary school curriculum areas. Their responses are summarised in Table 9.

Table 9
Students' Knowledge of Curriculum Content

	Percentage of students (N=289)		
Curriculum Areas	Very confident	Confident	Not at all confident
Language	49	49	1
Physical education	49	47	5
Mathematics	40	55	6
Art	38	50	10
Social studies	30	57	12
Science	29	57	14
Health	26	63	11
Music	21	48	30
Maori	13	38	48

COMMENTS ON TABLE 9

* Students are most confident about their knowledge of language, physical education and mathematics, followed by art.

* Conversely, students are least confident about their knowledge of the curriculum in music and Maori.

* When the two categories 'very confident' and 'confident' are combined
  - more than 90% of students overall say they are confident in language, mathematics and physical education
  - between 80 and 90% are confident in health, art, science and social studies
  - students are markedly less confident about music (69%) and Maori (51%).

Comparisons between colleges:

* With more than 90% of students saying they are confident in several subjects, there is obviously not much room for differences between colleges. It is interesting, however, to note that in Wellington and Christchurch there are two curriculum areas where *all* students say they are confident. These are language in both colleges, as well as social studies in Wellington and physical education in Christchurch.

* Maori is a curriculum area where there are significant differences between colleges. Wellington students are more likely than those in Auckland and Christchurch to say they are 'confident' that they have an adequate knowledge of curriculum content (Wellington 59%, Auckland 32% and Christchurch 39%, $\chi^2 = 13.063$), and less likely to say that they are 'not at all confident' (Wellington 25%, Auckland 55% and

Christchurch 43%, $\chi^2 = 16.466$).

* Wellington students are less likely than those at Auckland and Christchurch to say they are 'very confident' about art (Wellington 16%, Auckland 44% and Christchurch 40%, $\chi^2 = 14.580$). On the other hand, Wellington students are more likely to describe themselves as 'confident' (Wellington 71%, Christchurch 55% and Auckland 44%, $\chi^2 = 13.721$).
* In science, fewer Wellington than Auckland and Christchurch students say they are 'not at all confident' (Wellington 5%, Christchurch 9% and Auckland 17%, $\chi^2 = 6.493$).
* In social studies a higher proportion of students in Wellington than in Auckland and Christchurch say they are 'confident' (Wellington 71%, Auckland 55% and Christchurch 49%, $\chi^2 = 5.992$). However, those figures need to be seen alongside the percentage of students in each college who see themselves as 'very confident' (Auckland 29%, Wellington 29% and Christchurch 43%).

Curriculum Areas Not Seen Taught by Students : Third-year Interviews

We also asked the students interviewed whether, over their three years, there were any curriculum areas they had not seen taught in schools. The students divided about 50/50 between those who thought they had had a chance to observe all areas and those who thought there were subjects they had not seen taught at all or only rarely. Where students referred to subjects of which they had had little experience in the classroom, these were most frequently science, music and Maori, followed by social studies, art, physical education and health. A variety of reasons were given. A common one was that the student's time in the classroom did not coincide with the time when that particular subject was being focused on, for example, the class was concentrating on social studies, when the student had hoped to observe and teach science. It was equally likely that individual teachers did not feel particularly competent in a specific area, such as music.

There was further evidence that the colleges are regarded as being to the fore in advocating modern classroom practices in the fact that one reason students gave for not observing subjects taught was that the teacher assumed that they would have up-to-date information and encouraged them to teach themselves. Two students commented:

> I've had to teach Maori in every school, and implement the Maori programme. In my first section I ended up starting a culture group and getting Maori in the classroom and now I've got a letter from the principal, to say that they are now going to implement it in the school programme thanks to my initiatives which was really great to go on my CV. (Auckland)

8

> I've had to initiate all the science I've ever taken. At only one school was I lucky because I saw science. The science adviser for the school happened to be my associate. Music is another subject which is very poor - nobody ever sees it on section. You're lucky if you get anything more than singing. One section I had a recorder programme in place and that was okay but there wasn't much else. (Auckland)

Another student put it:

> When we go out into schools the teachers ask us what's the latest on this and that. (Christchurch)

It should be noted that if a teacher is running an integrated timetable there may be occasions when, for example, science is incorporated in the programme although it is not described as such.

Students' Experience of an Integrated Primary Programme

So far in this report we have looked at curriculum areas separately. We were also interested to find out a little about students' experience of, and attitude towards, teaching an integrated curriculum or programme. We asked them three questions:

- how regularly they had observed such a programme
- how regularly they had had a chance to teach such a programme
- how confident they felt about running an integrated curriculum/programme in their own classroom.

Table 10 summarises students' experience of observing an integrated programme in primary school classrooms and their chance to teach in such a programme.

Table 10
Students' Experience of an Integrated Primary Programme

	Percentage of students (N=289)			
	Frequently	Regularly	Seldom	Never
a. Have you had a chance to observe such a programme?	19	51	24	5
b. Have you had a chance to teach such a programme?	22	43	28	6

COMMENTS ON TABLE 10

* About three-quarters of the students overall (70%) say they have had a chance to observe an integrated programme 'frequently' or 'regularly'. Conversely, 29% say

they have seldom or never had such an opportunity.

- Just over two-thirds of the students (65%) say they have had a chance to teach such a programme 'regularly' or 'frequently'. Conversely, 34% of the students say that they have seldom or never had this opportunity.

Students were also given the opportunity to add a comment and about a quarter did so. Students' comments divided into a number of categories:

- General approval and enthusiasm for an integrated approach to teaching and their own intention to use such an approach in the classroom.
- Examples of experiences students had had on teaching practice, either observing associates or attempting integrated teaching assignments themselves.
- Where students gave examples they were frequently from their third-year programme when they had a specific college assignment, perhaps connected with a sole-charge or full control experience.
- Students' experiences are determined largely by the associates they have and the limitations of working in someone else's classroom with a timetable that may not be sufficiently flexible to allow for experimentation.
- A few students said they had not experienced integrated programmes on teaching section, or only rarely, referring to classrooms where curriculum areas were completely separated from each other.
- The limitations imposed by four-week teaching blocks.
- A few students commented on different levels of the school, integrated programmes being more likely in junior schools and least likely in intermediate schools.
- A few students said they would have liked more assistance at college.

Students' Confidence to Teach an Integrated Programme

Regardless of their experience while at college, nearly all the students, 96%, say they are either 'very confident' (42%) or 'confident' (54%) about running an integrated curriculum programme in their own classroom. Students who added a comment tended to emphasise:

- the importance attached to an integrated approach by lecturers
- students' own approval of the approach
- successful experiences they had had with associates using such an approach
- their own attempts to run integrated programmes while they were on section - usually successful and pleasurable
- the need for more practice in their own classroom to increase their confidence.

Students' Confidence in Using Computers

We asked the students: *How confident are you at using computers to assist children's learning in the classroom?* Table 11 summarises these responses.

Table 11
Students' Confidence to Use Computers to Assist Children's Learning in the Classroom

Degree of confidence	Auckland % of students (N = 194)	Wellington % of students (N = 58)	Christchurch % of students (N = 37)
Very confident	16	4	35
Confident	36	39	35
Not at all confident	48	57	30

It will be seen from Table 11 that about an equal percentage of students from the three colleges describe themselves as 'confident' to use computers to assist children's learning in the classroom (Auckland 36%, Wellington 39% and Christchurch 35%). Christchurch students, however, are considerably more likely to describe themselves as 'very confident' (Christchurch 35%, Auckland 16% and Wellington 4%, $\chi^2 = 16.541$). Conversely, 30% of Christchurch students describe themselves as 'not at all confident' compared with Auckland (48%) and Wellington (57%, $\chi^2 = 6.811$).

Male students are much more likely than female students to describe themselves as 'very confident' in using computers to assist children's learning in the classroom, $\chi^2 = 10.389$.

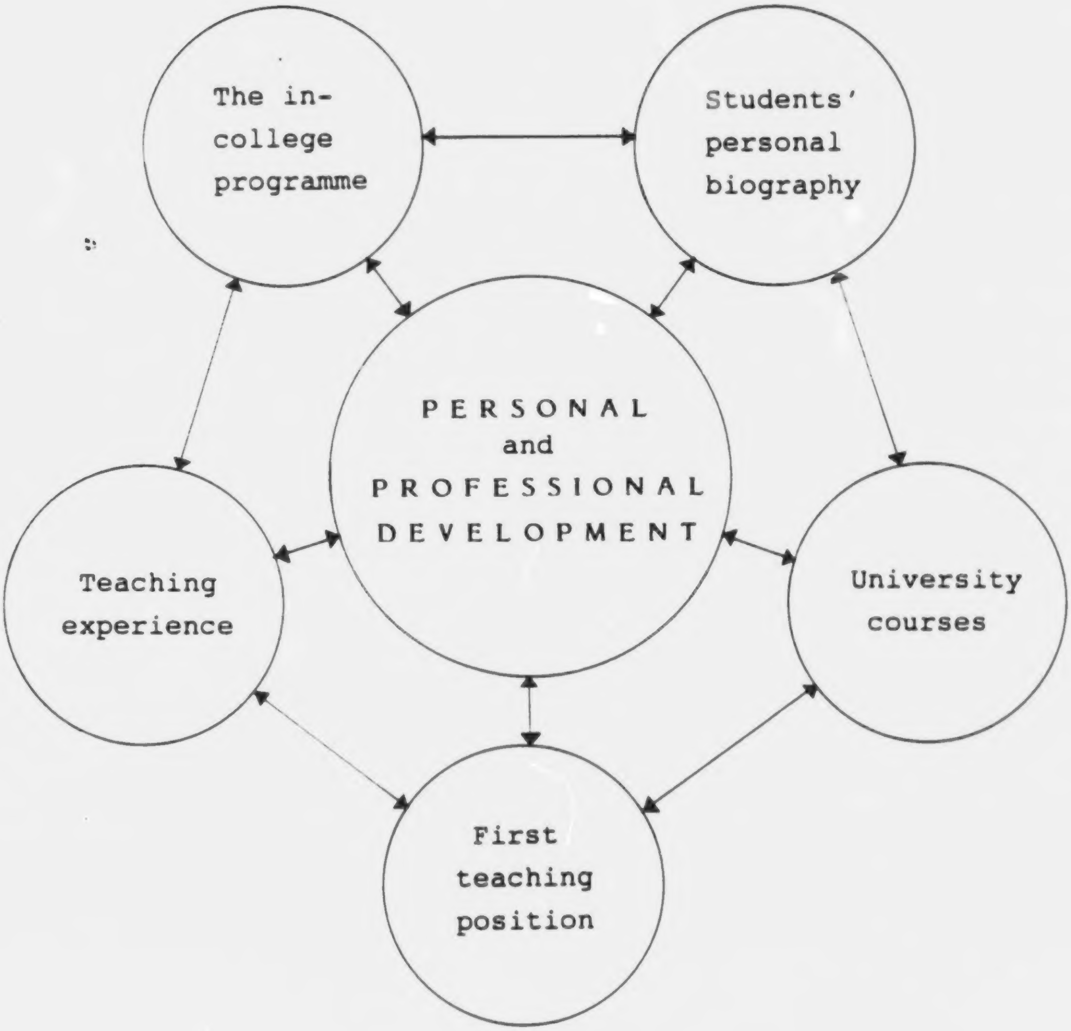
STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Students' Professional Development

When we interviewed the students in our interview sample in their third year, we asked them how they felt their professional skills had developed. We reminded them that when we had surveyed them before they started training most thought they already possessed at least some of the qualities and skills necessary to be a good teacher. In terms of becoming a classroom teacher, what difference did they feel their training had made to them? We asked the students to think back to how they were when they first came to college and then to reflect on the ways in which they thought they had progressed towards becoming a teacher. We were interested in such aspects as their increased knowledge of child development and how children learn, teaching methods and curriculum content, classroom management and record-keeping and short- and long-term planning. These tended to be issues which students referred to spontaneously in their responses. If they did not, we probed for further comment. The information was collected in such a way that we could not quantify the student responses. The qualitative data we did collect serve to highlight various issues, most of which were also raised elsewhere in the third-year interviews or in the students' responses to our final-year questionnaire.

On the basis of the data collected from students, we have developed a model intended to summarise diagrammatically the experience of students and their preparation to be primary classroom teachers.

Figure 2
Students' Preparation to be Primary Teachers


The in-college programme
Students' personal biography
PERSONAL and PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Teaching experience
University courses
First teaching position

There are two major components of a student's preparation to become a primary classroom teacher - their personal and their professional development, not that it is necessarily possible or desirable to draw a clear dividing line between the two. Many factors and experiences contribute towards these developments. Those we have identified are:

- the student's personal biography: those qualities, abilities and skills students bring with them to their course of training, and continue to develop
- the experience of the in-college part of their training
- the teaching experiences students have while they are at college
- courses of university study students have undertaken before or during their college course
- students' anticipation and actual experience of their first teaching position, particularly the school to which they are appointed and the age and composition of their first class.

These factors and experiences interlock and the significance of each varies from student to student. All contribute towards a student's ultimate contribution in the classroom. We cannot, on the basis of our study, and we doubt if individual students could either, give a weighting to the importance of any one factor. All play their part and all need to be considered when commenting on the ways students progress towards becoming effective beginning teachers.

What follows is a summary, under the various headings of our model, of comments made by the students we interviewed. As with other sections of this report, we have looked at the data across colleges because our interview sample size does not allow us to make comparisons by college, although we are aware that the students' experiences did differ according to place.

General Personal and Professional Development

Relatively few students referred to their general personal development in this section of the interview. Most of those who did mentioned their increased maturity and confidence. In the words of three students:

> I would say all over in confidence - confidence and self-growth. It's not just me, but a lot of people you've seen, they're fairly shy when they come in and by the end of the third year they're a lot more outgoing, more confident, more sure of themselves. (Auckland)
>
> I've grown heaps. I've done things like white water rafting and canoeing, just challenging myself so I know where I am. I think college does do that. They give you the freedom to do that, to know yourself ... (Auckland)
>
> I laugh when I look back now and think what I was like. It was pretty pitiful. I'm a lot more self-assured in the things I can do now. (Christchurch)

This personal confidence is often linked to increased confidence in the classroom:

> I can remember going on my first section and I just didn't really even want to be there. Now I really enjoy going into classrooms ... I feel a lot more confident. That definitely grew over sole charge. Once things start happening and the other teacher leaves the room, it's a sudden realisation that you are the teacher. I came home one day and said to my husband, "You know, I can do it!"
> It's been easier since then. (Wellington)

Most students who referred to their personal development commented on their increase in confidence. There were, however, a few who said their experiences during training, particularly on teaching practice sections, had made them less confident. This was usually because they thought they had good skills with children when they came into college but, now that they realised how complex and responsible teaching was, they were more diffident about their ability to do well. This was particularly the case with students who were perfectionist in their wish to be 'good' teachers.

A number of students commented that, for them, a major factor in their professional development has been an increased awareness of the complexity of teaching and how much was involved in being a teacher. When they came to college they did not realise how much they did not know.

> I think when I came to college, I didn't realise how much I really needed to know to be a good teacher and I think lots of things like my patience has definitely improved. The sort of patience of waiting and letting a child try something for themselves instead of jumping in and saying, "Right, we've got to do it this way. I want it to look like this on the wall." Being able in reading and maths to wait and let the children work it out for themselves. (Wellington)

> I think the college makes you realise how much more there is to it. The public vision of a teacher is somebody who stands up and looks after kids all day, but there's a lot more involved. I have learnt a lot recently in evaluating children, the children are individuals. In the beginning I had this vision that you stand up there and teach and they will learn, but you've got to be there and let them do the learning. (Christchurch)

> I think I was in a position a lot of parents are in, where you think you have all these abilities and you think you have the skills, or you wouldn't want to be a teacher but the way I have progressed is that I have seen things I didn't even know I didn't know about. I've learnt a lot about different sorts of children and I've learnt a lot about planning especially. You know you can have a vision, but without planning it's just a dream. (Auckland)

> Before I just thought you went into a class and taught these kids, but there is a lot of administrative work that goes along with it that I've learnt. And really thinking about why you are teaching children, and being able to pick up whether they have understood it or not and what I've done wrong and how I might fix it up next time. (Wellington)

> I used to mother help with my own children but I didn't realise the depth of the planning in maths, for example, the linkages and the extensions within that framework. You really have to have that background knowledge or guidelines to follow those through the way they should be done. And reading as well. My own kids learned to read - an absolute breeze. My daughter was reading before she went to school and I just thought, "Oh well, all kids are like this. We all just sit on a couch and read." But I got quite a shock to realise that everyone is not like that. So you do need knowledge. I wouldn't have known how to deal with a child who hadn't held a pencil in his hand before five, or couldn't recognise any of the letters of the alphabet. (Christchurch)

> There are so many things that you need to know to be a teacher. It's just ridiculous to think that anyone off the street could do it. You think you've got the skills because you get on well with children or you're the best babysitter in the world, but there are still many things to know. The course has definitely been worthwhile. I couldn't teach without it. (Wellington)

Students linked the personal skills they believed they had on entering college with the development of professional skills during their training. An example would be one of the older students we interviewed who commented:

> College focuses your awareness of various issues, like the need to cope with each individual child ... I always had a respect for the idea that children should be treated as individuals, but respect isn't far enough. My ideals were right but now I've got the equipment to deal with it as well. I've the knowledge to be able to handle the situation. So I think college has given me the tools, that's what it's done. ... On the emotional, moral side I haven't developed at all really. I've stayed the same. I went into teaching for a certain reason - it wasn't as if I came straight from school. But there's no way I had the tools before I came here. (Auckland)

Other comments referring to students' general professional development included:

* Growth in overall 'professional' attitudes and the need for 'professional conduct'.
* 'Loving children' is not enough.
* An ability to acknowledge one's own mistakes and limitations.
* The ability to keep an open mind - that your opinion is not the only one that counts, to be adaptable.
* Being aware of what they have to give to children while also acknowledging professional weaknesses.
* Facing up to the professional responsibilities of being a teacher.
* Awareness that 'the system' has changed since students were at school.
* Accountability to parents, boards of trustees and the community, including sensitivity to cultural differences.
* A more realistic appreciation of how much a classroom teacher can actually achieve - the 'reality' of teaching.
* An awareness of the 'politics' of education.

- An awareness that, although they have learnt much through the college course, there is much still to learn. The need for on-going professional development.

Students' Personal Biography

We have already considered some aspects of students' personal biographies in comments about their general personal and professional development. When we asked them, in terms of becoming classroom teachers, what difference the course of training had made to them, students gave other examples which emphasised how important they considered the skills and abilities they brought with them to college.

- The importance of their teaching experience before coming to college, including knowledge of how children learn.
- Prior work experiences which had relevance for classroom teaching, for example, planning and management skills from previous occupations.
- Personal commitment to the idea of being a teacher, in some cases from an early age.
- A love of, and commitment to, children.
- Personality traits students believe are important for becoming successful teachers.
- The influence of family members, particularly mothers who are also classroom teachers. Students may still use them as a point of reference ahead of most college lecturers, although others acknowledge that family are also interested in new ideas.
- Mature students who said that they did not need the length of time to 'develop'. Three years appropriate for school leavers.
- Knowledge of child development because of experience with their own children.

A few students who, on entering college, thought that they had a range of skills and abilities necessary to become good teachers now realise that some of these were not in fact appropriate. For example, students who had coached sports teams, working mainly with adults, now realise that working with children is different in some respects and they have had to rethink their approaches.

The In-college Programme

The in-college programme is largely the experience students have of particular courses. Throughout this study material about student reaction to particular college courses and departments has been difficult to handle because of the range of courses to which students may refer, and differences in course structures between colleges. In this part of the interview, students sometimes referred to particular courses but, more commonly, commented on knowledge they had gained from the college programme in general. The following is the range of comments students made at this point in the interview.

- *Child development and how children learn:*
  - If students did refer to child development and how children learn, they were more likely to say they had gained this knowledge through personal experience, classroom experience and/or university courses, than through

college courses. Some students acknowledged that they had been introduced to child development theories at college, but it was not until they observed children in the classroom that they felt their understanding was increased - thus indicating the importance of links between the colleges and schools.

- Where courses were referred to in Auckland, these were likely to be first-year human development courses and a second-year course with a focus on mainstreaming. In the words of students:

> A fair bit in the first year. Not so much from then on. We did an education course on human development and that was very interesting to learn some of the theories of learning - the way children grow and develop in different ages and stages and how they learn. I think that overall you get quite a good view of that from the human development course, plus your experience on the section with the different levels. (Auckland)

> A lot about child development and how children learn has come through in education quite strongly. In the last two years I have had a lot to do with my nieces. Before I came to college I had cousins, but I could never really understand why a child does something, but now with my nieces under two I can see them do things and I can relate that back to education and things happening in the class and I think, "Yeah, that's why they're doing such and such." ... Before I had no idea that a kid went through all these different stages. (Auckland)

> We had a big, huge thing in education last year about that, the developmental side of kids. And I think with this mainstreaming that they've brought that in as well. ... I've learnt to be flexible and that one child will be still at step one when another is at step seven and that's fine. Not to freak out and say, "Hey, you've got to get up here." Just to say, "That's fine, we'll just bring you along and we'll extend you and everybody will be happy." (Auckland)

> Education did a lot of that so fast that you didn't learn anything. I'm learning it now when I do varsity papers, more than I learned at college. (Auckland)

- Wellington students were likely to refer to PS 100, often not very favourably.[2]
- Christchurch students did not refer to particular courses other than a couple of general references to education courses.
- It was also quite common for students to say there had not been much emphasis on child development in college courses, 'just ages and stages touched on lightly'.

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[2] This is an example of a course that has now been considerably revised.

> That's a field I understand a lot more about, heaps more actually. But it's also a field I would personally like to investigate further. (Christchurch)

- On the other hand, there were also students who did not realise how much they had absorbed until they were in situations away from college where they could demonstrate their knowledge, for example,

> I noticed the other night at a social gathering that none of my friends out of college have anything to do with children. One of them is a hairdresser and a child came in and started throwing chairs around and the mother said the child was hearing impaired. I was able to tell her that it wasn't her fault that the child went berserk. ... they all thought I "really knew my stuff". As I said, "I couldn't cut someone's hair to save my life, but children is what I know." If they'd spent three years learning about them they'd know too. I didn't really realise until that night when I was talking to them how much I knew. (Auckland)

- It was common across all colleges for students' awareness of individual differences between children and the need to cater for individual needs to have been heightened through college courses. This confirms once again data we collected from students in their second year of training when we asked them how their views on the ways children learn had changed since they had been at college. One of the most frequently mentioned changes was towards a more child-centred approach and a greater awareness of children's individual differences and needs (see *Windows on Teacher Education, Phase 2*, p. 77).
- It was also common for students to comment on the increased breadth and depth of their knowledge of child development and how children learn:

> It [the college course] has given me more of an understanding of what children might do and how I might react and it's also given me more of an idea of how to help children learn in ways that are more than just facts and figures ways - more subtle ways of learning which I hadn't thought of before. I knew that children needed to learn to co-operate, for example, but now I have more idea of how they might do that. I've generally got a more professional approach. (Wellington)

- A theoretical approach to child development was a problem for a few students:

> Quite frankly, I don't remember a lot of that stuff. We do it in education, the child development things and I find that we learn it in a way that we can pass and then I feel it just goes in one ear and out the other because it's all so convoluted and they have a way of putting things into five pages that could be said in half a paragraph. And all that Piaget and stuff, they don't link it enough to practical things. (Christchurch)

* *Knowledge of the curriculum: primary school syllabuses*

It is difficult to summarise the range of student opinion about whether there has been sufficient emphasis in the college course on curriculum content and primary school syllabuses. The opinion in Auckland, for example, ranges from students who say there has been very little emphasis on curriculum content to those who say it has been very good. Not all students commented on the topic. Those who did tended to give examples of subjects where the coverage had been good.

That's something I didn't know anything about when I came in. I still don't know anything about it. Some subjects, like science, have given us curriculum and syllabus. It's the only one I'm up-to-date with because I've just written an essay, but apart from that I don't know much more of what children have to cover than when I started. (Auckland)

Curriculum content - yes, I think because the syllabuses - a lot of them have been revised quite recently, so they've been bandied around this place quite a bit. We've been shown them and said, "Well, how are you going to apply your teaching to this" or, "How are you going to use this syllabus?" (Auckland)

Social studies, I wasn't sure how to teach it, but now I do. I thought social studies was something completely different. I'm really pleased about that because I'm just motoring along in that now. With community health I'm now aware of a lot of the agencies I can contact. You can bring them into the classroom. I didn't realise a lot of agencies out there have actually got units that they can lend you or come into the classroom and teach them with you. Reading - I've learnt a lot in reading. There's so much involved in it. I know now how to pick up problems and activities that can help me. A lot of the good handouts in books that I have been getting. I feel a bit more confident now that if I have a problem I will be able to find out how to deal with it. (Auckland)

Yes, definitely, you cover the syllabuses in the classes so you know what's going on there and I'm quite confident about being able to follow a syllabus and the requirements. The only thing you don't know is how to put it into practice until you go out there and have to do it. (Wellington)

Well, things like reading, maths and language - those three especially, and PE as well, I pretty much know what I should be teaching. And then there's resources like new growth maths - things that are out in schools and we've talked about a lot in college. They've talked a lot about the syllabuses in social studies and science and how you might mean to teach those things and fitting the content into the class you're teaching. There has been quite a lot of information about how to plan different curriculum areas. A lot of assignments this year and the end of last year have been geared towards getting you to read the syllabus and then having to write something about it so that they know you've read it. (Wellington)

This year, yes. The first two years it's sort of buzzed on the surface ... but this year it's really intent on what you should teach in the curriculum areas and how you should go about it. But I think a year is too short to push all that sort of thing. If the course is going to be three years, then they should make it clear for the three years. The first two years are a cruise and then they shove everything in I think maybe it's because they've discovered we aren't going to get a position and they've started to ... and so now they're on about you should be teaching this curriculum area and that curriculum area and integrating everything. It's been practise and preach. It would have been better if we had learnt it in the first two years and then we'd have known how to implement it properly. (Wellington)

Yes, I think so - plodding through the syllabus. It's a buzzing topic to work out how to teach it. It helps that we're a lot more free than I'd thought we would be as to what we teach within the guidelines - we can teach the direction we want to. (Christchurch)

The actual content of the curriculum - especially in areas that I wasn't overly confident myself, like science. I really enjoyed the science because it's very co-operative and it's hands-on. So I learned about the content through going through the syllabuses and I've learnt what makes it happen and how you make it happen at the same time. (Christchurch)

* *Classroom management: discipline and control*

Students are likely to say they have learnt a good deal about classroom management since they came to college and it is a mixture of input from college courses and practical experience in schools. Education and/or professional studies courses are referred to in all colleges, with occasional references to other courses in various subject areas.

The course has definitely helped. I wouldn't have had a clue how to manage a classroom, but going out on section and having education managing techniques told to us and how to work effectively with children, that sort of thing. It's helped. (Auckland)

A great deal in the way of management, classroom discipline, organisation, blackboard skills and planning. Definitely planning, long-term/short-term planning, display areas, learning centres within a classroom. I've got a lot more knowledge on reading and the way of taking running records. What to do with ESL children, and as I say for a broad sort of understanding of mainstreaming children from education. It's mainly control techniques, management, organisation. A lot. (Auckland)

* *Planning and record-keeping*

Students are likely to say they have learnt more about short- and long-term planning and record-keeping on section than at college, although some students also acknowledge the importance of college courses. It is important to stress that we are reporting here on interviews that we held with third-year students in the middle of their final year. It may well be that procedures such as record-keeping (an essential part of evaluating children's work and planning in the classroom) were dealt with more fully in the latter part of the final year. Auckland students in particular are likely to think that there has been quite an emphasis in the courses on planning, particularly on short-term planning and lesson plans, but perhaps rather less on record-keeping. Wellington students are likely to refer to PS 300 as a course where these things can be raised if they have not been covered earlier in the course.

> I like to think of myself as reasonably organised but planning is vital. And that's something that's been really emphasised here. There's been less as we've gone on, and I think probably detrimentally in a lot of ways. (Auckland)
>
> Everything! I had no real knowledge of short- and long-term planning, specifically for school anyway. At a personal level I already had it [planning] reasonably under control but as far as school is concerned it has been really good. (Auckland)
>
> We have basically been given very little in the way of record-keeping other than when we are out on section, to look at the records that are being kept and ask questions about them which we have done but you don't really get to see that much. (Auckland)
>
> I'm not overly confident on long-term planning. Obviously I had to do four weeks of it on sole charge, but I don't think enough is done on long-term planning. Short-term is okay - one-off lessons, but long-term is not enforced enough. (Wellington)
>
> I have really improved in classroom management and record-keeping. I think it is really important anyway and I got that through teachers' college, that bookkeeping is important. (Wellington)
>
> Yes, it's been really great. It's something that I find quite easy now. I can write a lesson plan and go from there. I just think that if I've got my lesson planned and I'm well prepared then that limits my management and control problems. And if I've got all the children tuned in then hopefully I'm not going to have so many management problems. (Christchurch)

Issues raised by students:

- The difficulty for lecturers and students in keeping up with changes in methods of record-keeping in the schools
- The importance of planning. For many students the amount of planning necessary to run an effective and efficient classroom came as a surprise
- Not enough emphasis in the college courses on long-term planning to help students through their first year in the classroom
- Lecturers in some curriculum areas spent more time dealing with record-keeping than others. This would be true, for example, with lecturers responsible for reading
- Record-keeping needs to be thought of in terms of individual children as well as curriculum areas, for example, the need to note down things about children

which may be of later use, such as bruising which could indicate child abuse

- Confusion caused by different lecturers having very different approaches to planning, particularly the amount of detailed planning needed for lesson plans which may also vary from what students actually see in classrooms
- Both planning and record-keeping are easier to talk about than to do
- The problem of planning so that all children are catered for and all aspects of a topic are covered
- Concern about how much time has to be spent on record- keeping which may intrude on time students would rather spend teaching
- Importance of being able to see the connection between short- and long-term planning
- The amount of planning students do and the ease with which they do it is influenced by how efficient and well organised they consider themselves to be, and the importance they attach to planning in other areas of their lives.

Teaching Experience

Although it is difficult to quantify this qualitative data, it can be said that, as elsewhere in this report, many students were likely to refer to teaching experience as being the most significant way in which their training had helped them to become effective classroom teachers. It is also important to stress, however, that this aspect should not be considered in isolation from the in-college courses. Whether or not the students acknowledged the fact here, there were other occasions when they considered teaching sections as the opportunity to put into practice ideas which had been presented and discussed in college. It is not surprising that, as students are preparing themselves to be classroom teachers, they regard practical experience as so important. Students tend to measure their progress towards becoming teachers by their increased competence on teaching practice sections. This does not mean that their classroom experience is the only valuable part of their training. That would be similar to suggesting that work in an operating theatre is the only valuable part of training to be a surgeon.

In sharing their practical experience in schools with us, students mentioned all the areas we had already discussed in terms of the in-college programme, namely, child development, curriculum, classroom management and planning and record-keeping. In all cases, students were likely to say that they picked up most of their ideas in the classroom or, in some cases, were able there to put into practice ideas first encountered at college.

A minority of students were almost dismissive of the in-college programme, for example:

> I don't know that the training has made an awful lot of difference. It's the practical experience on section that makes the difference. I could go through a whole year here and the only times that I feel I actually am making headway with my ability to manage a class, and to actually help the children to learn is when I'm on section, and that's four weeks every six months. It's not a lot of time devoted to the real business of teaching. (Auckland)

More commonly, students acknowledged that both the in-college programme and the teaching practice sections contributed to their development as practising teachers:

> I think most things I've learnt, I've learnt through going out on section and making mistakes and having good things happen. But I've also learnt lots here about individual learning and all the things that I didn't really have any idea about. I've still got the qualities I had before in my personality but I've learnt everything I know about teaching since I got here. (Wellington)

> I've learnt quite a lot about classroom management, mainly from being on section though, but I think college has tried to give you a background on things in school and then you've gone out to school and you've had the experience and then you've had questions to ask and you can come back and ask the college and you can talk about the things you've experienced while you were out in schools. (Wellington)

University Courses

The question we asked students focused on ways the college course had contributed to their development as classroom teachers. We did not have university courses of study in mind, but some of the students in their responses referred to university experiences. Had we also referred to university courses, no doubt other students would also have given examples of how their university study helped to prepare them as classroom teachers, and indeed we have collected data on that topic elsewhere (see *Windows on Teacher Education, Phase 2*, p. 137).

The most frequent references to university courses were to knowledge students had gained about child development. For example, about half a dozen Auckland students who were also taking education or psychology courses at university said they had learnt more about child development from university than from college courses. This was before the introduction of the B.Ed. degree course. Two Wellington students commented:

> First of all I should say that when you ask me these questions, it's always very difficult for me to separate what I've learnt from college from what I've learnt from university because I'm majoring in education so I've obviously picked up a lot from there as well .... but I feel I've extended my views on child development, not so much through the college but through the university courses.

> I definitely know more about how children learn and that's both theory and having been out on teaching practice and seeing for yourself. I think a lot of what I know about child development has come from university courses, not so much from teachers' college. I remember in professional studies 100, they did one session about Piaget but even before they started, they made out that really it was a bit too complex for everybody. But more of that sort of thing has come from varsity for me.

A third Wellington student thought the combination of university and college courses was helpful:

> ... in professional studies we did Piaget and that sort of stuff, but I didn't really understand what was going on. But now at varsity we are doing that too, so that now I have done it a second time, I sort of know what is going on and now I am able to

> pick it up a bit faster and understand a bit more about the developmental stages - not that I can relate that to teaching yet. I suppose I might be able to take it out and really see they are going through these stages. I don't know.

A Christchurch student commented:

> Child development? Not in terms of college because I did a course at varsity - at college it's hardly touched on at all. You're expected to do varsity work to get that knowledge, so it's good that I did that one course.

First Teaching Position

Initially it may appear strange to consider the students' first teaching position as influencing their reaction to their course of training while still in college. The problem for those students who mentioned this issue is that they have trouble thinking in the abstract about how well prepared they are to teach a class when they do not know the level and age of the children or the school within which the class will be. There is only so much the college can do. As one student put it:

> You don't know until you have a class of individual children just what they need, what their expectations are, what the expectation of the parents in the area are. All schools differ.... Children are always changing and you're never going to have the same 30 children at the same age as well, so it's experience - no matter how much theory you do, it really comes down to the experience I think. At least college can give you an awareness of what to expect. I think that's basically what they can do. Open your mind a bit. (Auckland)

Because neither the lecturers nor the students know the age group students will be teaching, courses are less specific than some students would like. One student commented:

> We don't really know much about the primary school curriculum. All you get is that every school is different. You will find that out when it comes to the syndicate meetings. You've got to find your school before we can tell you. I mean I couldn't tell you at standard 2 what science they have to learn, whether they have to know insects or body parts, I couldn't tell you because they don't teach us that. I don't feel they've taught us that at all. I suppose it comes down to what the school is doing and I agree with that. (Auckland)

We will have more data on this topic when we complete our interviews of first-year teachers. The material we have already collected through our interviews of those two-year, graduate trainees now in classrooms, shows that, not surprisingly, the class and school in which beginning teachers find themselves is a further important influence on their development as effective teachers.

Student Reaction to Teaching Approaches Advocated by Lecturers

When we had interviewed students in their second year, we had asked a series of questions about students' professional development which included lecturers' and students' views of what makes a good teacher, and whether or not lecturers presented a coherent and co-ordinated view of how children learn (see *Windows on Teacher Education, Phase 2*, pp. 68-80). As third-year students, we asked them if they were basically in sympathy with the classroom teaching methods advocated by the college. For at least 80% of students across the three colleges, the response was 'yes'.

Teaching Approaches Advocated by Lecturers

- Lecturers vary in the methods they advocate, but most approaches are acceptable to students
- Students are anxious to develop their own teaching style and do not rely entirely on the views of lecturers
- Most lecturers acknowledge this, and encourage students to experiment with a range of approaches
- Students may have trouble relating the 'theories' presented at college to the actual methods used in schools. They may practise the approaches without recognising or using the 'labels'
- Lecturers tend to be idealistic. The practices they advocate may be appropriate in a perfect world, but they cannot always be applied in the real world of the classroom
- Lecturers tend to favour their own subject and have unrealistic expectations of what teachers, responsible for all curriculum areas, can achieve
- The approaches advocated by lecturers may be good, but students do not always get a chance to see them demonstrated in the classroom
- Lecturers do not necessarily practise what they preach, for example, the value of an integrated curriculum.

Examples of students' comments:

> I think the methods they advocate are really good - well the ones I've tried have worked quite well. The methods they teach now are much better than the old ones - teacher teaching child, and sit up and listen. ... Now it's all child centred. If a child has power over her own learning she will learn better because if she wants to do something she will do it. ... I think the strategies are very important, it's just that you don't see them in the classroom very often. (Auckland)
>
> The methods are good. There are a lot of teachers in the classroom still following teacher chalk and talk. It's a shame that they haven't moved with the times. But there are also some great people out there as well. The things that we've learnt like co-operative learning are really great. You just don't always see it happen when you go out on section. (Auckland)
>
> They're good, they're helpful. You're going to develop one of those techniques, whichever one suits you, and you've got options. You've got a variety of teaching methods you can use, and it's good to get a broad understanding of them all. (Auckland)

> I don't put them down as gospel. They're just giving us examples, ideas that we can go on and either reject or expand. They don't say, "Now this is how you have to teach for the rest of your life. This is an example and if it doesn't work for you in your class, try something different." When you go out to your class you have to go with your class. You've got a back-up with the guidelines they have given us. (Auckland)

> I'm quite happy with them. Some teachers seem to me to be quite rigidly structured and boring. If I was in their class I would be bored. The college really does try to help us to have a whole range of skills and ideas and to vary things, and to work out our objectives from the children's interests, so we take whatever it is that they are interested in and work on that, which I like. I think it makes sense, that it gets something that kids are motivated about. They don't even realise that they're learning what you want them to learn. (Wellington)

> They are ideal methods. Every lecturer in every course thinks that they're one of the only ones and you should put it all into practice. It's not always easy out there when you've got to cover every area. But I think what they're getting at - child learning and doing their own growth and development is just fabulous, and they do impress on us that children are individuals and develop at their own rates. It's wonderful. (Wellington)

> I guess I'm developing my own opinions and taking from college what I like for my own use. I'm sympathetic with the methods that have been advocated in some curriculum areas like language - the more thematic approach to the whole curriculum. I'm just picking and choosing different ideas from different courses. (Christchurch)

Links Between Teaching Practice and the College Course

We were also interested in whether students thought their teaching experience or teaching practice was co-ordinated with the rest of the college course in the sense that the methods advocated by the college were basically in sympathy with those practised in schools. Did students think there was a mismatch between what was advocated in the college and what teachers practised in the classroom? To what extent did students feel they had had the chance to see in schools the kinds of teaching practices advocated in the college? We also wondered whether there were any occasions when students felt the practices in schools were in advance of methods or curriculum content discussed in college.

When we raised these issues we had in mind the four- or six- week teaching experience blocks, but these are not the only occasions when students are in schools. They may also visit classrooms for demonstration, or one-off lessons which they prepare themselves, linked to particular college courses. Several Auckland and Christchurch students referred to experiences they had had at normal schools attached to the college where demonstration lessons had been planned specifically to demonstrate teaching approaches being discussed in a college course:

> When the college wants you to see a specific teaching technique they sometimes set up visits to model schools. In those cases because the teacher and the class has got a specific agenda you will see exactly what's been talked about. (Christchurch)

> Sometimes we go out in a bus with 30 other people and we stand and watch the teacher. You get an ideal situation in the sense that the lecturer has rung up and said that she wants the trainees to see such and such a style of teaching, but it's not the real world like when you go out on section. That's real life teaching and things aren't practised all the time there. (Auckland)

As indicated in the second of these two comments, students may complain that these situations are rather artificial, but they are occasions when students see particular teaching methods demonstrated.

The situation with teaching practice sections, on the other hand, is more of a lottery - much depends on the associate and class students find themselves with. Some teachers are 'on the same track' as college lecturers but others do not teach in ways sympathetic to those advocated by the college. The reality of the classroom means that even up-to-date teachers find it difficult to perform well in all areas with all pupils all of the time. Over a period of three years, however, most students would have had the chance to see a range of teaching styles in practice. Even those they did not agree with helped them to formulate their own views on what was good practice. The following are examples of comments made by students who did not believe that there was any appreciable mismatch between what the college advocated and what they observed in schools:

> I've been in quite a range of schools from South Auckland up to Orewa and I've done a normal school as well. That's good because the normal schools are really geared towards what the college is on about and what they talk about in college is actually happening at the normal schools and even in the other schools that I've been in. The principals and staff in the schools I've been in have been quite open to change and new ideas coming through and have picked them up quite well. (Auckland)

> I don't think there's any great mismatch. I think that it takes someone with a bit of maturity to see underneath and see that in fact it is co-ordinated, that it is relevant. Perhaps at first glance schools are so different and you think they're not doing what we are taught at college, but in fact they are. It's just that teachers have been teaching for longer, have incorporated ideas themselves. Every school is different but on the whole I felt that the methods are being practised in schools. (Auckland)

> Most definitely "Yes" - a variety of schools and they've done different approaches - each time seemed to fit the child so neither was wrong. We've never been taught one way at teachers' college and they've said that is the only way. They've said this is the way we recommend but there are other ways to use. (Wellington)

> From what I've learnt so far - just the style of teaching that I'm developing, I've had really excellent sections - every single one of them, and I've learnt so much from each teacher. (Christchurch)

> What I've learnt here I've actually seen out in schools. I've probably been one of the lucky ones. I've actually experienced quite a variety of different teaching techniques. I've had pretty good sections really. (Christchurch)

Students who were more inclined to see a mismatch between teaching methods practised in schools and those advocated by lecturers usually said it all depended on the schools and classrooms to which students were posted, particularly if the teachers had been in the classroom a long time and were set in their ways.

Examples of students' comments

> You go to an associate with the ideas that have been put across at teachers' college and they have no idea what you are talking about. They say, "I don't do it like that. I do it this way which I've been doing for the last 10 years." You say, "Okay", and sit back and relax. ...Some ideas they just don't like. Process writing is one. I had an associate who just said, "Oh, we don't do it like that. It's ridiculous. Kids don't like it it so we don't do it." ... Reading is another one. One school I went to the only reading that I saw on my section in four weeks was five to 10 minutes silent reading every day. The kids didn't develop at all. They were just left to themselves. Half the time the teacher would just walk out and prepare other stuff during reading time so there was no supervision. Some of them were busy picking up comics and picture books which they did every day - there was no direction or guidance to it. (Auckland)

> Yes and no. I think they prepare us to be these super wonder teachers when there are a lot of very mediocre teachers that we're going out to see on section. ... They don't do any of these amazing new methods that we see in college, so I guess I haven't seen many teachers practising what's taught here. ...I think the college is trying to produce good teachers but they're fighting against a whole lot of schools who have got very average teachers in them. I'm not saying there are no good teachers - there are some brilliant teachers, but I've also seen some pretty mediocre ones. (Auckland)

> Yes and no - three out of five - two were dreadful. The way the schools were run and the teachers have had an almost weary sort of approach, tired, we'll manage to get through somehow. But other schools there's an aura about the place. You just walk in and soak it up. It's great. (Auckland)

> Yes and no. I've had some memorable teaching practices. Others, especially in my first year were more a question of learning what *not* to do. As you go through the college system you get more clued up and you learn to take a more active role in selecting what school you want to go to. You do that by hearing about good associates and then you request those people. (Wellington)

> None of the associates I have had have been the totally rounded individuals that we're supposed to be, that the college advocates. Some have strengths in one area and not in another, but I haven't seen any associate that can implement all areas of the curriculum in an effective way and be a caring, sensitive, culturally aware person. (Wellington)

> It's a hotch-potch - it depends on the associate really. I'm sure some of them are modelled on systems that we are taught here, but the personality of the teacher can make it go either way. ...They all do different things, for example, when you talk about planning and management - I've been in two schools where I didn't see a short-term plan let alone a long-term plan or any other sort of planning. It seems to just float out of their heads. (Christchurch)

> One of my associates certainly wasn't my ideal type of teacher. She yelled a lot at the children which is not the way I like to control them and we all have these theories from college like positive reinforcement is the way to go. On my previous sections I'd tried that and it worked. So that was becoming my idea of teaching and then walking into her classroom, I couldn't use that because it didn't work. The children were used to being yelled at so I had to take on her role which I did not enjoy. It was an intermediate setting which again for me was against what I stood for. Intermediates don't work for me. There are too many children of the same age and too many chops and changes in their daily programme. (Christchurch)

> I think when you go on section the schools can have quite a negative attitude towards college. They sort of say, "Oh, you know what you learn at college is all rubbish" - it puts you in an awkward position. (Christchurch)

Practices in Schools in Advance of Those Advocated by the College?

We asked the students if there had ever been occasions when they had seen practices in schools which they thought were in advance of those advocated at college. The majority, more than 80%, said 'No'. It is clear from students' comments that, on the whole, they regard the teaching methods advocated by the college to be up-to-date and in the vanguard of teaching practices:

> The college on the whole is in advance of the teachers. I think teachers should keep coming back and having refresher courses and keep up with what's happening. I've seen some pretty weird things happening in schools. (Auckland)

> To me college seems to be ahead compared to the school situation. Because the only way the schools can keep up with the curriculum is for teachers to go on courses, the AST courses, or by having fresh teachers out there, or by having some advisers who have got the up-to-date information. The college seems to be a little bit further ahead because they keep up with the times whereas the schools will take time to adjust anyway. There are a lot of schools out there that are becoming equal but they would not be ahead. (Wellington)

There were isolated comments from students, about half a dozen from each college, which gave examples of practices they had seen in schools which they considered to be in advance of those advocated by the college. Usually, these were occasions when the student had had a 'brilliant' associate. There were also occasions when the handling of one particular subject area was noteworthy - reading, physical education, maths and English as a second language were all given as one-off examples.

Examples of students' comments:

> I've seen ideas in some areas of the curriculum where teachers have picked up the ideas and extended them themselves but I don't think that it's really in advance of college, it's just that the teacher has seen a bit further into that idea or has seen the guidelines and thought, "I can do that as well". ... Improved isn't the word - it's just a gung ho teacher who's said, "Wow, I can do this as well." (Auckland)
>
> Mainly in the area of behavioural management and the use of parents in schools. It's portrayed better through the school than I think they could do here - it's just easier in the teaching situation in schools. Reading I've seen done a lot better in the schools. There's a good reading department here, really, really good, but a lot of the things that they come out with, things that in the last year are the new things, whereas we go out now and the teachers have tried this new thing for a year and it hasn't really come off and they've adapted it to their own ways, incorporated their own ideas into it which has made it a better programme altogether. (Auckland)
>
> I had this amazing teacher - she was a reliever and she had just moved into a classroom and so I saw her setting up the class and just her being positive and her setting up things like spelling programmes, making spelling a really big part of the whole school day. Things like that we can't get through college - that's what sections are for. When I get a class if I come anywhere near like her I'll be absolutely buzzing. She was just an amazing person and she had 10 things going at once in a classroom but they never clashed - there was always that busy sound, never loud. Children were happy in a positive environment. (Auckland)
>
> There was a teacher I had who had been teaching for about 16 years. She had started in the junior school and worked her way up. She had had that grounding and then moved to an intermediate school and she still operated her programme in the same way that you operate in the junior school - a comprehensive reading programme which you don't usually find in an intermediate and she was way ahead in terms of the way she applied that. She had 26 Pacific Island children and she had adapted her programme to Pacific Island needs. (Wellington)
>
> My last section when I was with a whanau. Teachers' college was just beginning to talk about that system but they had been doing it for a couple of years in the school and it was a system that they found really worked. ...They had J1 to S4 and I hadn't had anything to do with something like that. And ESL we haven't had any help with that. It was fantastic. I really liked that style of learning. ...The whanau is all about integration of everybody together, family learning. It makes it hard for planning but

it's worth it, really and truly. It was great. (Christchurch)

Students' Preparation for Teaching in a Range of Organisational Settings or Types of Schools[3]

We asked students through the questionnaire how well prepared they were to teach in a range of organisational settings or types of schools. Their responses are summarised in Table 12.

Table 12

Students' Preparation for Various Organisational Settings and Types of Schools

Organisational setting or type of school	Percentage of students (N=289) Very well	Adequately	Not well
Junior classes	42	39	18
Middle school	60	38	2
Senior school	53	39	7
Intermediate school	35	44	21
Whanau groupings/classes	13	24	62
Vertical groupings	14	31	48
Composite classes	39	43	16
Cross-school organisation, eg across syndicate organisation for maths	28	47	24
Open plan/flexible spaces	21	46	31
Multicultural classes	40	40	18
Bicultural classes/immerson	15	26	58
Maori enrichment classes	10	12	76
Mainstreamed children	17	48	33
Rural schools	28	32	38

COMMENTS ON TABLE 12

Areas of the school and types of school

Of the various areas of the school, students overall are likely to think they are best prepared for the middle school, 60% of students saying they are 'very well' prepared for this area, compared with 53% thinking they are 'very well' prepared for the senior school and 42% for the junior school. Thirty-five percent of students overall think they are 'very well' prepared for teaching in intermediate schools. In answer to another question in the questionnaire, students indicated that eight- to 10-year-olds, or middle-school pupils, are those the highest proportion of students would most like to teach (see p.73).

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[3] The material in this section (p. 69-73) is based on data collected through the questionnaire using questions originally prepared by staff at the Wellington College of Education for completion by previous intakes of their students. Comparative analysis is yet to be undertaken.

* There were differences by college, Christchurch students being more likely than students in Auckland and considerably more likely than those in Wellington to think they were 'very well' prepared to teach in the junior school (Christchurch 59% of students, Auckland 44% and Wellington 25%, $\chi^2 = 11.585$).

Various organisational settings within a school

* Of the various organisational settings listed, those where two-thirds or more of the students overall thought they were either 'very well' or 'adequately' prepared were:
  - composite classes (82% of students)
  - multicultural classes (80% of students)
  - cross-school organisation, for example, syndicates (75% of students)
  - open plan/flexible spaces (67% of students)
  - mainstreamed children (65% of students).

* Of the various organisational settings listed, those where fewer than half of the students overall thought they were either 'very well' or 'adequately' prepared were:
  - vertical groupings (45% of students)
  - bicultural classes/immersion (41% of students)
  - whanau groupings/classes (37% of students)
  - Maori enrichment classes (22% of students).

* There was one difference between colleges where students indicated that they were 'not well prepared' to teach 'vertical groupings' (Auckland 53%, Christchurch 43%, Wellington 32%, $\chi^2 = 8.199$).

Students' Preparation to Carry Out Various Professional Responsibilities

We asked the students to complete a series of tables designed to indicate how well prepared they were to carry out various professional responsibilities. The first one asked the students:

> *If you can picture yourself as a teacher going out to teach your own class, in which areas do you feel most confident, and in which areas do you feel least confident?*

80

Table 13

Students' Confidence with Various Aspects of Classroom Management

Aspects of classroom managment	Most confident % of students (N=289)	Least confident % of students (N=289)
Establishing good working relations with children	94	3
Preparing lessons	91	6
Stimulating children's interest and effort	89	8
Establishing good class tone	89	7
Relating to other staff	89	8
Using teaching methods suitable to children and curriculum areas	88	9
Understanding children's needs	88	9
Establishing good classroom routines	88	9
Using teaching aids effectively	82	12
Planning a programme	79	19
Classroom control and disruptive children	74	23
Evaluating children's work	64	34
Assessing children's on-going progress	58	37
Keeping records	55	43
Providing individualised programmes	44	53
Parent interviews	38	59
Report writing	31	65

COMMENTS ON TABLE 13

Students could tick as many or as few categories as they wished. Students were more likely to tick categories about which they felt confident than they were to indicate they did *not* feel confident. In total, 3584 student responses indicated confidence compared with 1229 indicating lack of confidence.

Areas where students are most confident

* Of the given list, those categories where the highest proportion of students, more than 80% in each case, felt 'most confident', were:
  - establishing good working relations with children (94%)
  - preparing lessons (91%)
  - stimulating children's interest and effort (89%)
  - establishing good class tone (89%)

- relating to other staff (89%)
- using teaching methods suitable to children and curriculum areas (88%)
- understanding children's needs (88%)
- establishing good classroom routines (88%)
- using teaching aids effectively (82%).

These were followed by:

- planning a programme (79%)
- classroom control and disruptive children (74%).

Three other areas were ticked by more than 50% of the students:

- evaluating children's work (64%)
- assessing children's on-going progress (58%)
- keeping records (55%).

Three items were ticked by fewer than 50% of the students:

- providing individualised programmes (44%)
- parent interviews (38%)
- report writing (31%).

Areas where students lack confidence

* The list of areas where students are *least* confident is not an exact mirror image of the list of areas where they are *most* confident, but there are obvious parallels.
* The aspects low on the list of areas where students say they are most confident tend to be high on the list of areas where they are least confident. For example, report writing and parent interviews are at the bottom and top of the two respective lists.
* The areas where students are least confident are referred to by a much lower percentage of students than those where they are most confident. For example, the top seven areas where students are confident are mentioned by about 90% of students, whereas the most frequently mentioned areas of lack of confidence are referred to by 65% or fewer.
* There are only four areas where more than 50% of the students say they lack confidence, compared with eight areas where 10% or fewer students say they lack confidence.
* It is interesting to note the relatively high proportion of students (53%) who say they are least confident in providing individualised programmes for pupils in light of the fact that catering for individual needs is considered by most to be a hallmark of our education system. (See, for example, p. 78).

Differences by college

The percentages in tables of this sort should be treated with caution. There do, however, appear to be variations by college.

Auckland
Auckland students' responses are very similar to those of students overall.

Wellington
The students' responses on the whole match those for students overall and students in Auckland, except for one area where Wellington students appear to be rather less confident. This is 'relating to other staff' (79% compared with 90% of Auckland students and 97% of those in Christchurch $\chi^2 = 7.858$).

Christchurch
Christchurch students differed from the other two colleges in several respects. In three areas, a significantly higher proportion of students indicated that they were 'most confident':

- planning a programme (95% compared with Auckland 75% and Wellington 82%, $\chi^2 = 7.706$)
- keeping records (84% compared with Wellington 55% and Auckland 49%, $\chi^2 = 15.000$)
- assessing children's on-going progress (81% compared with Wellington 63% and Auckland 53%, $\chi^2 = 10.715$).

In three further areas, a lower percentage of students indicated that they were 'least confident'. These were:

- providing individual programmes (35% compared with Wellington 48% and Auckland 57%, $\chi^2 = 6.787$)
- evaluating children's work (16% compared with Wellington 30% and Auckland 37%, $\chi^2 = 6.579$)
- parent interviews (46% compared with Wellington 50% and Auckland 64%, $\chi^2 = 6.582$)
- keeping records (16% compared with Wellington 36% and Auckland 49%, $\chi^2 = 15.141$).

Age and Special Groups of Children Students Would Prefer to Teach

Students completing their course of training were asked to state a preference for the age group of children they would like to teach. We had asked students the same question on entry to college. The students' responses are given in Table 14.

Table 14

The Age Group Students Would Most Like to Teach

Age group preferred	N	% 1991 (N=289)	% on entry to college (N=549)
5 - 7-year-olds	83	30	26
8 - 10-year-olds	125	43	34
11 - 12-year-olds	88	30	22
Over 12-year-olds	40	14	9
No preference	32	11	28

Note: About 80 students ticked more than one category.

COMMENTS ON TABLE 14

* Eight- to 10-year-olds or 'middle primary' was the group preferred by the highest proportion of students. This is the group most students said they preferred on entry, but the percentage of students opting for this age group has increased (43% compared with an earlier 34%).

* The difference between preferred age groups is not great. However, if the 11 - 12-year-olds and the over 12-year-olds are combined (44%), these would equal the percentage of students preferring to teach eight- to 10-year-olds (43%).
This pattern was similar to that on entry to college. The percentage of students preparing to teach children of eight years or older definitely outnumbers those interested in teaching five - seven-year-olds (30%).

* Compared with their position on entry to college, more students at the end of their training are likely to have a preferred age group (11% compared with 28% who had previously said they had no preference), and a greater proportion now state a preference for teaching older children.

In all cases approximately half or more of the students who preferred a particular age group in 1989, had changed their minds by 1991, and preferred a different age group.

Special Groups of Children

Students were also asked if there were any particular groups of children with whom they would like to work. A high proportion (71%) said there were. This figure corresponds almost exactly with the figure for students on entry to college.

Table 15

Particular Groups of Children With Which Students Would Like to Work

Groups of children	No. of students (N=289)
Particular ethnic group/multicultural/ESL	88
Special needs/deaf/mainstream	48
Children of low SES background	31
Children of particular age group	21
Gifted children	16
Rural children	12
Slow readers	8

It will be seen from Table 15 that if students indicated special groups of children with whom they would like to work, they were most likely to express an interest in working with children from a range of cultures. More than half of these specified multicultural classrooms; about 20 said they wished to work with Maori children and about 10 with Pacific Island and Polynesian children. Other students referred to children for whom English was a second language, particularly Asian children. The next largest group of student responses referred to children with special needs, including physical, mental and emotional disorders. The number was not, however, much more than half that of those students indicating an interest in working with children from different ethnic backgrounds. These proportions are the reverse of those indicated by students entering college when a far larger percentage indicated an interest in children with special needs than in children from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

One can only speculate as to why this may be but it is reasonable to assume that students' experience in multicultural classrooms while at college has probably increased their awareness of the mixed ethnic and cultural composition of many New Zealand classrooms. It is more difficult to suggest reasons why the proportion of students wishing to work with children with special needs appears to have declined during their time at college. One factor may be that, with an increase in mainstreamed children, students accept that most classes will include children in this category and that, while they will inevitably be working with them in a normal classroom situation, they do not envisage working with them as a separate group. It is interesting to note that a third of the students had earlier said that working with mainstreamed children was something for which they had *not* been well prepared. (See p. 69).

Student Views on Reasons Why Children Succeed or Fail at School

We asked students to answer two further questions which we will consider together, as they are essentially two sides of the same coin:

> *I think children learn best when ...*

and

> *What do you think are the main reasons why some children do not succeed at school?*

We had asked the students the same two questions when they filled in the initial questionnaire on entering college.

Coding these open-ended questions raised the typical problems of qualitative data analysis - interpretation, classification and quantification. On the basis of the students' responses, a model for classification was prepared when we asked the question on the first occasion which suited both questions. We used the same model when the students were surveyed at the end of their training. Essentially the model was divided into three segments, namely, factors dependent on or influenced by:

Children:	I)	Their motivation; emotional state; self-esteem; personality; confidence
	II)	Their abilities: mental and physical, including health.
Teachers:	I)	Their overall competence as teachers; their teaching methods, including activity methods and discovery learning; their recognition of children as individuals; discipline
	II)	Teacher personality; teacher/pupil relationships
	III)	The curriculum introduced by teachers: content; relevance; cultural appropriateness.
Environment:	I)	The home: parental support
	II)	The school, particularly the classroom atmosphere; organisation; resources
	III)	Influence of peers: class co-operation.

Comments About Student Responses

* *The role of the teacher*

- The competence of the teacher is seen as the main factor contributing both to children's success at school and to their failure
- It is the teacher's responsibility to use appropriate teaching methods in a classroom environment which is stimulating for children and supportive of their needs
- The single most important contributor to school failure is teacher incompetence, either because of the use of inappropriate teaching methods, curriculum content which does not suit individual children, an unsupportive classroom environment, or inadequacies of teacher personality and poor teacher/pupil relationships
- There appears to have been a shift in student opinion about the role of teachers. Competent teachers are still the main contributors to pupil success

but students are more likely to regard lack of teacher competence as contributing to school failure, than they did when they entered college.

- *The role of the pupil*
  - Students made very little reference to children's abilities, either mental, physical or social, as contributing to either their success or failure at school, but there appears to have been a slight shift since students began their course of training. On entry, a minority of students referred to pupils' lack of academic ability, the fact that, in the words of one student, 'some children are just thick', as being a contributing factor to school failure. The students made no such comments at the end of their course. Similarly, some students on entry to college explained school failure in terms of children's physical handicaps, for example, poor eyesight or hearing. There were fewer such references at the end of the course. The underlying assumption was that all children are capable of learning, and it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that this occurs
  - By comparison, how children feel about themselves, particularly their self-esteem, is an important factor in contributing to both school success and school failure. Children with low self-esteem are often poorly motivated to learn.

- *The role of the parents*
  - Students believe that the role of parents and the home is markedly less significant than either the school or the children themselves in contributing to either school success of failure. Where parents do have an impact, it is more likely to contribute to failure than success. There does, however, appear to have been a movement in student opinion since they began their training. Although few students mentioned parents contributing to school success, they were less likely at the end of their training to believe that parents were responsible for children's failure at school.

Students' Key Beliefs About Education and Learning

We asked the students through the questionnaire, *What are your 'key beliefs' about education and learning?* The students had the opportunity to make three comments. Two hundred and thirty-nine students made a total of 424 comments. Sixty students chose not to answer this question. For some this was because of the difficulty of summarising their views. As one student put it, 'My philosophy says it, but it's 1000 words long.' Others wanted to wait until they got out into the classroom. (No doubt others were simply tired of filling in the questionnaire and baulked at this abstract question!)

This question also raised the common problems of categorising open-ended responses, particularly the difficulty of allocating responses to discrete categories. Categories overlap and link with each other. The following is an attempt to summarise the students' key beliefs about education and learning in order of importance.

* The child is an individual learner: classrooms should reflect a child-centred approach to learning and teaching

- all children must be treated as individuals
- children have different abilities and needs
- programmes must be planned and implemented to meet individual children's needs
- children learn at individual rates and in different ways. The classroom programme must allow children to learn at their own pace
- teachers need different teaching strategies for different children
- learning must be geared to what the children *can* do not what they *should* do
- all children should feel that they are important and that it matters what they think, believe and feel
- children should be encouraged to develop personal strengths
- teachers need to understand each child and respect their needs
- children should be encouraged to take increasing responsibility for their own learning
- children should take pride in their own work and have their work acknowledged
- all children need to feel confident and to experience success as the basis for further learning.

* Classroom programmes and the curriculum

- children are keen to learn
- integrated, investigative, co-operative approaches are best
- co-operation is preferable to competition
- programmes should be 'holistic', for example, they should consider children's physical, social, academic and spiritual development
- programmes need to be balanced, including the full range of curriculum areas
- programmes should provide the opportunity for children to experiment and take risks
- the learning experiences provided for children should be stimulating, challenging and thought-provoking
- children need to be motivated
- goals which are set for children, or which they set themselves, need to be realistic
- activities must be practical, relevant and related to children's experiences and the 'real world'
- classroom programmes should be as pleasurable as possible. Children learn better when they have fun
- there needs to be on-going evaluation and assessment of children's progress.

* Equality of educational opportunity

- all children are equal

- all children have a right to education regardless of gender, and ethnic and social background
- education should be free
- all children should be encouraged to understand children of the opposite sex, and children from different cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds.

* The quality of the educational environment
  - children learn best in a supportive, secure and caring environment where people are friendly and positive.

* The role and commitment of the teacher
  - teachers are role models and must be enthusiastic about all aspects of education
  - teachers need to enjoy teaching and care about children. Teaching is more than just a 'job'
  - teachers are facilitators and guides to learning and can offer opportunities for learning to take place
  - 'learning' occurs regardless of 'teaching', but a teacher can facilitate and enhance the degree of 'learning'
  - a good teacher is a good learner. Teachers are learners as well as educators.

* Education is the key to personal development, future jobs and a better society
  - education is the 'key' to all aspects of life
  - a good education system is the basis of a good society
  - education is important in today's world. To be part of contemporary society, children need to be developed academically, socially and culturally
  - children need to be provided with the basic skills to get jobs
  - education improves the quality of people's lives
  - the education system must be able to anticipate the future needs of the country and then provide the learning situations that will allow them to be met.

* Education is lifelong; it occurs inside and outside the classroom
  - education is lifelong 'from the cradle to the grave'
  - education is a continuous process that should be available to everyone at any stage of their life
  - we should learn together from each other.

* Home/school relationships
  - education is a balanced learning environment - school, home and community
  - parents are the most valuable resource when dealing with children
  - teachers need to be accountable to their clients - the families and school they are representing
  - staff, boards of trustees and parents work together to teach children successfully

- the learning environment of the home and the school need to be consistent.

It is interesting, in reading the students' comments, to reflect on what is *not* mentioned, as well as what is. Relatively few students referred to education and its role in society. The major focus was definitely on the development of the individual - a child-centred, individual development model rather than one that emphasised group or social responsibility and co-operation with others. There were many comments on appropriate approaches to learning and teaching but very few on curriculum content. There was almost no mention of behaviour and discipline.

COLLEGE OBJECTIVES

Each college has a written set of objectives. As part of the questionnaire students completed at the end of their training they were asked to rate each objective on a scale from one to five according to how well they felt they had been addressed by the college. As is common with five-point scales, the students' ranking of how the college had lived up to its own expectations tends towards the average.[4] Each college has a different set of objectives so comparisons between colleges are inappropriate. It should be noted, however, that in all three colleges students thought the objectives relating to teaching skills had been most thoroughly addressed.

Auckland

College Objectives

A. Create conditions that will foster growth of course member as educated professional people with informed and sensitive attitudes towards society.

B. The continued development of scholarship involving both the intellect and the imagination.

C. The continued growth of personal qualities especially those of sensitivity, enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility towards others.

D. The acquisition of knowledge and skills and experience of value to a teacher.

E. The recognition that education is a lifelong process.

F. To provide academic and practical courses, educational experiences and a wide range of additional activities offering opportunity for personal development.

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[4] We applied the Scheffe test to this data to determine whether the mean scores for each objective were significantly different. Mean scores are given in brackets.

Table 16

Students' Rankings of Extent to which Auckland College Objectives Addressed

Objectives	Not addressed at all 1	2	3	4	Very thoroughly addressed 5
	Number of Students (N = 194)				
A	7	27	78	55	19
B	10	48	83	37	8
C	7	32	62	61	23
D	6	19	67	73	20
E	8	29	53	51	44
F	7	18	60	63	37

The objectives students rated as those most thoroughly addressed are:

F. To provide academic and practical courses, educational experiences and a wide range of additional activities offering opportunity for personal development. (3.385)

E. The recognition that education is a lifelong process. (3.328)

D. The acquisition of knowledge and skills and experience of value to a teacher. (3.267)

The objective rated significantly lower than the others was B, the continued development of scholarship involving both the intellect and the imagination. (2.785)

Wellington

College Objectives

A. The continued development of scholarship involving both the intellect and the imagination.

B. The continued development of personal qualities especially those of sensitivity, enthusiasm and a sense of the teacher's responsibility towards society.

C. The development of an understanding of the history and purpose of education.

D. The promotion of an understanding of children, their growth and how they learn.

E. A development of an understanding of school curricula.

F. The development of teaching and class management skills.

Table 17

Students' Rankings of Extent to which Wellington College Objectives Addressed

Objectives	Not addressed at all 1	2	3	4	Very thoroughly addressed 5
			Number of Students (N=58)		
A	2	10	29	10	3
B	1	6	10	25	12
C	8	22	16	7	-
D	-	4	19	18	11
E	-	5	15	23	10
F	-	3	12	22	17

Objective F, 'the development of teaching and class management skills', was the one which students considered to be the most thoroughly addressed. (3.839)

Objective C, 'the development of an understanding of the history and purpose of education' was considered to be the least thoroughly addressed. (2.286)

The means of all the remaining objectives did not differ significantly from each other and ranged from 2.929 to 3.625.

Christchurch[5]

College Objectives

A. Understand and apply the principles of learning, teaching, and effective human relationships.

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[5] These were the college objectives in 1989 when we interviewed our sample of first-year students. They have since changed.

B. Experience a wide range of teaching styles and strategies and demonstrate skills appropriately.

C. Know and implement appropriate curriculum areas.

D. Understand the national guidelines and principles of curriculum.

E. Extend their academic education.

F. Become sensitive to and learn the value of the diversity of cultural backgrounds of the learners.

G. Acknowledge and practise the principles of equity.

H. Use the library system's educational technology and resources effectively.

I. Have the opportunity to develop a range of personal interests.

J. Develop a sense of professional and corporate identity.

Table 18

Students' Rankings of Extent to which Christchurch College Objectives Addressed

Objectives	Not addressed at all 1	2	3	4	Very thoroughly addressed 5
			Number of Students (N=37)		
A	-	3	13	5	6
B	1	2	12	17	5
C	-	2	11	19	5
D	-	3	19	8	7
E	-	14	8	12	3
F	-	7	14	12	4
G	-	4	17	14	2
H	1	7	14	13	2
I	2	10	12	8	4
J	-	5	13	16	3

The mean scores for the Christchurch objectives were all grouped closely together and none were significantly different from the others. The scores ranged between 2.973 and 3.730.

STUDENT PROFILE 3

In her third year, Sarah has enjoyed college for the first time. She thinks this is largely because she is more confident and she knows what she is supposed to be doing. The lecturers are also offering much more practical advice. She thinks the best thing about the college is the fact that the lecturers are so approachable and willing to help, particularly in the third year. (Sarah feels this so strongly that later when we asked her if were there any 'key events' in her time at college, she said that what stood out was the way individual lecturers had gone out of their way to help her.) Sarah's main criticism of the college is that she cannot see the relevance of some assignments, more of which, in her view, should be school-based.

When we interviewed Sarah halfway through her third year, she was taking five courses at college. She was enjoying all of these except education. She said she did not want to sound negative but she did find education boring - some bits are quite good, but a lot of it is 'quite waffly'. She has appreciated the fact that in the last few weeks, outside speakers have been brought in to talk about children with special needs. It's certainly been helpful to find out who one could go to for advice about the classroom. Sarah has been quite excited by her other courses. Maths, which she is taking as a major, she is enjoying for the first time this year because of the excellence of the lecturers and the practical nature of the course. Science too is great because of an 'absolutely fantastic lecturer', fresh from a school and 'absolutely clued up'. The lecturer is really motivated and this flows on to the students. A 50-hour course on English as a second language has also been really good, once again because of the quality of the lecturer who 'really knows his business'. The course would have been even better if there had been some contact with children during the course so that students could have practised what they have learnt. Sarah thinks this particular course should be made a compulsory component of the first-year language course because students have so much contact with Asian and Polynesian children when they go on section and need early guidance as to how to work with them. Sarah thinks the selected studies courses she took in science and art should also have been compulsory.

Two courses Sarah now regrets not taking are home economics and computer studies. Sarah is, however, very confident in her ability to use computers to assist children's learning in the classroom. Of all the courses Sarah has taken during her three years at college, the three she thinks will be most useful in terms of her future experience as a classroom teacher are science, maths and reading. These are also the subjects Sarah feels most confident to assess. Sarah is looking forward to teaching in most primary school curriculum areas apart from Maori, music, drama and social studies. These are all subjects where she lacks confidence in the curriculum content. Sarah is, however, quite confident in her ability to run an integrated programme in the classroom.

In terms of Sarah's professional development, she thinks the college's main contribution has been in helping her to develop planning skills. She thinks planning is the key to success in the classroom. There was also a major course on classroom management and record-keeping in an education course, which was helpful. She is less certain about the college's assistance with child development and primary school curriculum content, two areas she thinks she has learnt more about in the practical setting of the classroom where 'hands-on' experience is possible. With six months of the course left to run, Sarah's own concern is with her ability to teach music. She didn't get much from the only 50-hour course she took in music.

Sarah has had a chance to see in school most of the teaching approaches advocated by the college, particularly through her last section at the normal school, which was 'fantastic'. She thinks a couple of her earlier choices of schools were mistakes as they meant she didn't see as much good teaching practice modelled as she would have liked. She has, however, had the chance to observe most curriculum areas being taught, with the exception of social studies. She has never seen teaching practices in schools that she considered to be 'in advance' of methods advocated by the college. On the other hand, some approaches suggested by lecturers are 'ideal' approaches - great in theory but students are not always helped with the means of putting them into practice with children. Students tend, for example, to have experience with small groups of children when practising various reading strategies, but working with a whole class is much more difficult.

Sarah does not feel she has been subject to any sexist or racist practices since she came to college, but she does think sexism and racism are both issues in schools; people are often just not aware that they are being either sexist or racist. Discussions at college and at university have been helpful. Sarah is still ambivalent about her attitude towards biculturalism, mainly because of the multicultural nature of the classrooms she has been in - all children have to be treated equally. She feels, however, that she has been very well prepared for teaching in multicultural classes, for dealing with sexism and racism among pupils and for handling children from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. When Sarah started college she had no knowledge of the Maori language. She did one semester in Maori studies but says she did not learn anything of Maori language and is disappointed that she did not have more opportunity to do so.

When we asked Sarah about the parents of the children she would be teaching, she was very positive about her relationship with them. She regards parents as a valuable source of support in terms of helping out with basic reading and maths - 'just another person to help the teacher'. She also thinks they will be useful in preparing such things as art materials, although she sees them more in the role of extra teachers rather than just doing menial tasks. She doesn't think she has had much preparation for discussing children with parents but she thinks it is very important and should be handled in a positive way.

When Sarah talked about assessment she said she gets put out when other students hand in late work and lecturers are lenient. On the other hand, she has made a point of going to lecturers this year and getting clearer guidelines as to what is required in their assignments and how they will be marked. This has led to her getting good marks, which she finds really encouraging. She has found her assessments on section helpful, but they would be even more use if teachers were less concerned about offending students and prepared to offer more constructive criticism. Sarah does not yet feel particularly confident about assessing children's work although she is confident in her ability to use evaluations of children's work to improve her teaching programme and very confident about reviewing her own performance as a teacher. Sarah found the college's tutorial system quite helpful and feels that her final profile accurately reflects her performance as a student. She also thinks it will be helpful in getting her a job.

Sarah is about as motivated to be a teacher as when she began the course. In view of some of her other comments, Sarah says, rather surprisingly, that now that she has nearly completed the course, she is 'not at all confident' about having her own class to teach. This is probably because she thinks the college course needs to be more practically and resource based, with more time spent in schools. As the course was run in her time, she considers it was too long and the amount of spare time 'ridiculous'.

Sarah is pleased that she is taking university courses as well as those at college. She enrolled at university at the same time as she started college and has had to fit her university courses around the college timetable. Apart from the interest of the university papers, she is glad she took them because otherwise she would have been bored by college, particularly this year, when there has been so much free time. She thinks her university courses will definitely contribute towards her effectiveness as a classroom teacher, particularly the papers she is taking on curriculum studies and educational psychology. Sarah intends to complete her degree next year rather than apply for teaching positions straightaway.

Sarah regards primary teaching as a 'stepping stone' to work in other areas of education. In the future she would like to work as a guidance counsellor.

STUDENT PROFILE 4

Brent very much enjoyed his first two years at the college but he's a little disenchanted with the college in the third year because he has so much time on his hands. On some days he has only one lecture. He thinks the lecturers are good and feels he's covered all the necessary curriculum areas but he doesn't feel challenged in the third year. He really feels the course could have been covered in two years. He realises that if he had been attending university he would have been extended but he does not regret having decided not to attend university as well, a decision he made because of the fees and extra expenses involved. Because the third year at college has been quite slow, Brent is rather less motivated to be a teacher than when he began the course. However, primary teaching is still his first choice of a career although he regards it as a stepping stone to work in other areas of education. In five years' time he hopes to be holding a senior position of responsibility in a primary school.

Brent is pleased with the education course this year, which is covering the range of children that students can expect to encounter in the classroom - the gifted child to the mainstreamed child. It's been quite an eye-opener. He's really enjoyed working on the research assignment which was part of the course. He's always enjoyed physical education, which he considers to be good for his own personal development and, at the same time, of practical use in the classroom. Music, on the other hand, is disappointing - so much depends on the lecturer you get, and he has one students are dissatisfied with. Brent's problem is that he already knew a good bit of what was covered initially, although after some student complaints things picked up. Education outside the classroom and first aid were both good courses but at the time of the interviews Brent was only working on the five courses just described, and the workload was insufficient. Of all the courses Brent has taken the ones in physical education, social studies and science would be the three he thinks will be most useful in the classroom. Physical education and science, along with written language, are the three curriculum areas he has had most experience of teaching while he has been at college. Physical education, science and education outside the classroom are the three he is most looking forward to teaching. He's seen very little drama in the classroom and not much use of computers; he is confident, however, that he will be able to use computers to assist children's learning. He has had quite regular opportunities to observe and teach an integrated programme and is confident he will be able to teach an integrated programme when he has a class of his own.

Brent had a pretty good idea of what being a primary school teacher entailed when he came to college because he has spent quite a bit of time in his mother's classroom. Nevertheless, he feels he's picked up some really good ideas from college. He considers most of the lecturers to be up-to-date and his mother and other teachers at her school have been interested to hear of current practices. Physical education and science would be two areas where lecturers are well informed about the latest ideas.

With six months of the college course to go Brent's main concern is how to get started as far as his first class is concerned, particularly in terms of assessing where the children are at, and organising them into appropriate groups. Judging by the overview of what is coming up in the third term and from the experience of students in previous years, he will be getting practical help in these matters before the end of the year.

Brent talked a bit about his relationship with the parents of children he hopes to teach. He thinks it is very important for teachers and parents to work in partnership; each has particular responsbilities which need to be seen in relation to each other. He would like parents who have expertise in a special area to come into the classroom to share their skills with the class. He is unsure about his ability to talk with parents about their own children as he hasn't had any experience of that yet. Nor has he yet had any help with reporting to parents.

Brent doesn't believe there is a great mismatch between the teaching methods advocated by lecturers and what is going on in schools, although he has seen a great variety of teaching styles while on section, not all of which would be approved of by lecturers. On the other hand, they seem to work for the teachers. Maori is probably the only area where Brent doesn't feel he has had the chance to see much taught in schools. This may be because he's been in classes when teachers were not focusing on Maori topics which suggests that not many of them, in Brent's experience, are really bicultural classrooms, although he did note that several of the classes he was in for one-off lessons appeared to be bicultural. Brent is pretty much in sympathy with the teaching methods advocated by lecturers. For him, the most useful parts of the course have been getting out into schools, learning to plan and work co-operatively as a team member, and learning a variety of different teaching methods and approaches. He thinks his associate teachers have had the greatest influence on his teaching style but the science and social studies lecturers at college have also provided good role models.

Brent thinks children learn best when the teacher is prepared, organised and enthusiastic. The main causes of school failure are poor home environments and problems with their peers.

When we talked about equity issues, Brent said his views had not really changed since he'd been at college. He was interested that students doing the college early childhood course had a course called Women's Studies, which looked only at women. He thinks if they are going to do that they should have a course on studies about men as well. He does not feel he is well prepared to deal with sexism in the classroom. As far as ethnicity and racism are concerned, he feels the college does not do enough to help students cope with children from a range of ethnic backgrounds in school, Indian and Chinese for example, as well as Maori. The only two curriculum areas where there was some discussion on multiculturalism were social studies and health. The health lecturer is Samoan and Brent found her comments on cultural differences very interesting.

Brent thinks the college has improved its methods of assessing students this year. Sheets are now issued to students which tell them how work is going to be marked and students know exactly what they have to do in order to, for example, achieve distinction. It's really over to the student to fulfil the requirements. He thinks this system has helped him to improve his performance because the clear guidelines means he's likely to do more reading around a topic. He also finds the positive, critical comments he's received on section to be helpful, for example, he's been able to refine his methods of control by trying out different ideas suggested to him while on section. He doesn't, however, feel very confident about assessing children. There has been some work done in college in physical education, science and reading but on the whole he thinks it's left to students to find out how the teachers assess children while they are on section. He hopes he may get something from the maths course he is going to do in the third term.

Brent has had the same tutor for three years and he thinks the system works well. He gets on well with his tutor and it's good to know there is someone you can always go and talk to. He's been very supportive, particularly when Brent had a minor operation and had to take time off college. Brent feels it's important for the tutors to know students well because they are responsible for writing the final student reports. Brent feels his own final report accurately reflects his performance as a student and should help him get a job. The tutor group meets once a week and most students turn up unless they have a conflict of commitments.

As far as 'key events' go, Brent would have to say the Interdisciplinary Studies programme (IDS), particularly the one where he learned how to make unconventional musical instruments, would be one of the highlights. He says it's just amazing how cheap and effective the instruments are, and the children love them.

STUDENTS' RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS

When we had surveyed students at the beginning of their training and asked them what they thought the various school reforms had meant for schools, a common answer was that parents now had a more important role to play (see *Windows on Teacher Education, Phase 1*, p. 142). When we interviewed them as third-year students we asked them, as future classroom teachers, how they felt about their relationship with parents. We were interested in such issues as how they saw their role in relation to parents, what they considered their responsibilities towards parents to be, what part they expected parents to play in their classroom, how they thought they would feel about discussing children with parents and reporting to them about their children's progress, and whether they thought they had been prepared for these roles.[6]

Importance of Parent/Teacher Relationships

Most students emphasised how important they believed their relationship with parents to be for a number of reasons:

- Parents' natural concern for their own children.
- Parents' knowledge of their own children.
- Educating children is a partnership between teachers and parents. Classroom teaching is likely to be more effective if teachers and parents pull together.
- It is important for children to know that teachers and parents have a good relationship.
- It is important that there is good communication between teachers and parents.
- Parents have an important contribution to make in the classroom.
- Parents have an important role to play in the school, particularly since the recent school reforms. Parents, as members of boards of trustees, are the teachers' employers.

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[6] See also an earlier study on the extent to which students are prepared for their role in relation to parents: Renwick, Margery (1984). *Student Teachers and Parents*, Wellington, NZCER.

Difficulties Students Envisaged in Their Relationship with Parents

- * Lack of confidence on the part of first-year teachers because they would be younger than most parents and had not had the experience of being parents themselves.
- * Parents who expect too much from teachers, are overly critical, or interfere in matters which are not really their concern.
- * Parents who do not want, or are not able, to be involved in classroom activities because they work, are too busy, or do not realise the importance of the relationship between teachers and parents.
- * Teachers are professionally trained but their expertise may not be acknowledged by parents.
- * How to handle parents who, in the view of the teachers, are not caring for their children as they should.
- * Personality clashes between teacher and parents.
- * How to handle parents' criticism.

A Teacher's Responsibilities Towards Parents

Those students who referred to their responsibilities towards parents suggested the following:

Teachers need to

- make sure parents always feel welcome
- make sure each child progresses
- keep parents informed about their child's progress, including areas of weakness and how these might be addressed
- cater for each child's needs
- explain the class programme to parents
- find out what the parents expect their child to learn
- keep parents informed about changes taking place in the school and the overall system of education
- follow the school charter.

A few students stressed that, although parents are important, a teacher's first responsibility is to the children.

The Part Students Expect Parents to Play in Their Classroom

It was common for students to say that they hoped parents would play an active part in their classroom, although this would depend on:

- school policy
- the willingness and availability of parents
- the level of the school at which they were teaching. In the students' experience, parents were more likely to wish to be involved with younger children.

A few students regarded themselves as 'the professionals' and were reluctant to involve parents. It was also common for those who said they would involve parents to stipulate limits because they were trained and parents were not. Students said that they would involve parents in one or more of the following ways:

- By holding a meeting early in the year to discuss what they hoped to achieve during the year
- To give support and help when required, for example, trips and camps
- To assist with group work, for example, spelling and reading
- To assist with cultural and sporting activities
- To be free to come and go in the classroom as they wished
- By using any professional or recreational strengths of the parents
- By asking parents to help collect, prepare and maintain materials and equipment
- By asking them to support the teacher and the child by supervising work sent home.

Students' Confidence to Talk With Parents and Report to Them

Students recognise the importance of discussing children's progress with parents and the need to report to them more formally. Most feel reasonably comfortable about their ability to talk to parents although they are less confident about formal reporting sessions, partly because of lack of experience and partly because many students felt this was something for which, at this stage of the course, they had not been adequately prepared. Issues raised by students included:

- In order to report effectively, teachers need to know each child well and to keep good records of individual children's progress. Various methods of record-keeping were referred to by students, including running records and keeping an individual folder on each child.
- Record-keeping is important but it is also time-consuming and can be burdensome for classroom teachers.
- Students described various methods by which they intended to keep in touch with parents, for example, getting the children to produce a newsletter every few weeks telling parents about classroom activities.
- The need for both parents and teachers to be open and frank with each other.
- The need to deal with parents honestly but positively. Information about their children must be accurate and specific.
- The difficulty in formal report-back sessions, of passing on bad news.
- The need to keep in touch with parents when their children are doing well, as well as making contact when there are problems. If there are problems parents should be contacted as soon as possible.
- The problem of making contact with parents who do not come to school for interviews.

- The need to cater for parents from different ethnic backgrounds in a way that is culturally appropriate.
- The need to report to parents in person as well as in writing.
- The difficulty of explaining a child's behaviour and performance at school if it is at variance with the parents' view of how they behave at home.
- The need for teachers to be able to explain what they intend to do about a child's learning difficulties.
- Parents should be encouraged to make an interview time if they have something they wish to discuss rather than just turning up in the classroom.

Students' Preparation for Their Relationship With Parents

It was difficult, through the student interviews, to get a clear, overall picture of how well they thought the college programme had prepared them for their relationship with parents. Mature students and those who were parents themselves were invariably confident in their role. Others referred to experiences they had had on section when parents were present in the classroom or when they had observed associate teachers discussing children with parents. For most, these experiences had increased their confidence, although there were isolated incidences where students had observed a teacher's experience with 'difficult' parents which had made them aware that parent/teacher relationships could be stressful.

At the time of the interviews students still had six months of their training to go. Courses to come may well have been designed to cover parent/teacher relationships. A number of Christchurch students referred to education courses they were doing at the time of our interviews in which reporting to parents was being dealt with very effectively. In Wellington, several of the students we interviewed had taken a course, Working with parents, designed specifically to look at the issues we raised with students. Those who had taken this course were very satisfied. For other students it appeared to be more of a lottery. A teacher's relationship with parents could come up in one of several curriculum courses, reading and science being two mentioned to us. It is also true to say, however, that about half of the students we interviewed did not think that the college had prepared them particularly well for this aspect of their work, although their experiences on section had been helpful. Teaching practice, coupled with their own self-confidence, meant they believed they would develop good relationships with parents.

Other comments made by students did not fit into any of the categories mentioned earlier:

- Students who were concerned at negative attitudes towards parents displayed by other students. In the view of one mature student this was because younger students were too close to being 'rebellious teenagers' themselves and did not fully appreciate the role of parents.
- The difficulty for students of knowing what their relationship with parents will be like because, until now, they have been regarded as students, rather than fully trained teachers.

Confidence With Parents : The Questionnaire

We asked only one question in the questionnaire about students and their relationship with parents when they were classroom teachers: *How confident do you feel about justifying your classroom programme/philosophy to parents*? Most students were either 'confident', 52%, or 'very confident', 31%. The remaining 16% were 'not very confident'. There was little variation between colleges.

SOME EQUITY ISSUES

We asked the students, through the questionnaire, how well they thought they had been prepared to deal with sexism and racism among pupils and with children from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. Their responses are summarised in Table 19.

Table 19
Students' Preparation for Dealing With Various Equity Issues

Equity issue	Very well % of students			Adequately % of students			Not well % of students		
	Auck	Wgtn	ChCh	Auck	Wgtn	ChCh	Auck	Wgtn	ChCh
Sexism among pupils	29	48	30	47	45	65	24	4	5
Racism among pupils	30	50	38	44	38	51	26	11	8
Children from a range of socio-economic backgrounds	41	57	57	49	36	38	9	5	3

Note: For Auckland N=194, Wellington N=58 and Christchurch N=37.

COMMENTS ON TABLE 19

* Wellington students are more likely than those from Auckland and Christchurch to say that they are 'very well' prepared to deal with sexism ($\chi^2 = 7.296$), racism ($\chi^2 = 8.058$) and children from a range of socio-economic backgrounds ($\chi^2 = 6.887$).

* Auckland students are more likely than those from Wellington and Christchurch students to say they were 'not well prepared' to deal with sexism and racism among

pupils, about a quarter in each case (χ^2 = 16.994 and χ^2 = 10.456 respectively).

Student responses to this question may have been influenced by their prior knowledge and experience of these issues as well as the impact of the college course.

Equity Issues : Student Interviews

One focus of the first and second phases of this study was student views on various issues of equity - sexism, racism and socio-economic status. In the second year interviews we had questioned students about the various equity issues by asking them:

- Whether their own views on any of the issues had changed since the previous year, and
- How they thought the college was addressing issues of sexism, socio-economic status, racism and biculturalism.

Before the third-year interviews, we sent the students a copy of the comments they had made in their second year to remind them of their earlier opinions. In the interview we then asked them whether their views had changed and the reasons for this. We have not completed the analysis of this data as we intend to include it in our next and final report when we will be tracing more fully some of the longitudinal aspects of the students' development. Our initial impression is that no new issues were raised in the third year. The issues commented on by students were the same as those already fully reported on in our second report (see *Windows on Teacher Education, Phase 2*, pp. 113-129).

Maori Language

We tried to ascertain whether students had learnt as much Maori language as they would have liked while they were at college. We first established how much Maori the students could speak on entry to college. Table 20 summarises students' Maori language ability on entry to college, by college.

Table 20

Number of Students Able to Speak Maori on Entry to College

Fluency	Auckland		Wellington		Christchurch		All	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Fluent/native speaker	4	2	1	2	1	3	6	2
Conversational Maori	21	11	6	11	1	3	28	10
Greetings, few words only	126	65	35	63	20	54	181	63
None	49	25	16	29	16	43	82	28
Total	200*		58		38			

* A few students ticked more than one category.

Overall, 91% of students come to college either speaking a few words of Maori (63%) or none at all (28%). About 10% had conversational Maori and 2% of students said they were fluent or native speakers of the language; these were more likely to be students who classified themselves as 'Maori'. Perhaps not surprisingly a higher proportion of Christchurch students (43%) spoke no Maori at all on coming to college and a smaller number were fluent or could carry on a conversation in Maori than at the other two colleges. Students over 30 years old were more likely than younger students to speak no or very little Maori on entry to college, $\chi^2 = 15.029$.

Nearly three-quarters of the students (73%) said they had *not* had as much opportunity to learn the language as they would have liked. With minor variations, this was so regardless of students' ethnic background or how much Maori they could speak on entry to college.

Students Who Had Had as Much Opportunity to Learn Maori as They Wished

Just over a quarter of the students (77 or 27%) said that they had had the opportunity to learn as much Maori as they wished. Wellington students were considerably more likely than students at other colleges to say this - 41% compared with fewer than a quarter of the students at Auckland and Christchurch (χ^2=7.355). About half of the students added a comment to support their view. Almost all the student comments were from Auckland or Wellington, with the majority from Auckland. The comments tended to fall into four categories:

- Although the students had not learnt much Maori, they had learnt as much as they wished to learn because Maori was not a top priority for them.
- They appreciated the opportunities provided by the college and the support received from other students. The opportunities were there, but not all students availed themselves of them.
- Although they had had the opportunity to learn as much Maori as they wished, they were critical of certain aspects of the college programme and organisation, including the quality of some lecturers and limitations imposed by the timetable. (These comments were similar to those made by students who said they did *not* have the opportunity to learn as much Maori as they wished, discussed below.)
- They had learnt their Maori elsewhere, for example, at night class or university. Course levels at college were not appropriate for them.

Examples of the range of student comments were:

> Maori is not really relevant in a multicultural society, so therefore I feel my knowledge is sufficient. (Auckland)
>
> The opportunities have been there, however I did not wish to sacrifice main curriculum areas to learn Maori. (Auckland)
>
> Encouragement from other students - listening and being included in conversations. (Wellington)
>
> Depends on the lecturer's attitude as to my attitude. I had an excellent lecturer in my third year and therefore would have loved to have arranged more courses but, timetable constraints. (Wellington)
>
> I am very interested in Maori, have in fact majored in it. I feel it is one of my strong points in the classroom! (Auckland)
>
> I have done three compulsory and two units selected studies but found it threatening and frustrating. (Wellington)
>
> I was able to take varsity and college Maori language courses. I chose to take other subjects as I was unimpressed with ACE Maori Studies department. (Auckland)
>
> The opportunity is there - it's whether you are motivated to learn - the lecturers are very helpful, and willing to put in extra time. (Wellington)
>
> There is a lot of encouragement to speak and teach Maori. (Auckland)
>
> Opportunity was there however, I did not take it up in first and second year apart from curriculum courses and now I regret this, as I have developed a particular interest in Maori. (Wellington)
>
> Personal interest (studied at varsity also) Maori college courses have improved since

> 1991 curriculum selection allowed. (Christchurch)
>
> In between "yes" and "no". There is so much to be fitted into our third year - more opportunities in most curriculum areas are needed and a priority needs to be made to curriculum areas that aid learning, for example, reading and maths. (Auckland)
>
> The courses offered were either introductory or advanced and I am in-between. (Auckland)

Students Who Had Not Had as Much Opportunity to Learn Maori as They Wished

About two-thirds of the 211 students across the three colleges who said that they had *not* had the opportunity to learn as much Maori language as they would have liked added a comment. Most indicated that they had expected to have the chance to learn more Maori language than was provided by the college courses.

Auckland

About 100 students added a comment. At least two-thirds of these were critical of the opportunity provided by the college for students to develop an adequate knowledge of the Maori language. Although a few students suggested that their experience of 50-hour compulsory courses had been inadequate and more intensive Maori language courses were necessary, most were more specific in their criticism of the Maori Studies department. A common complaint was that the courses were superficial and not an adequate preparation for the classroom. Too much time, in the students' view, was spent discussing Treaty of Waitangi issues, learning a few greetings and singing songs. Those students who already had at least a little knowledge of Maori did not feel they had been extended. Allegations of racism were also made.[7] Typical of the range of comments were:

> Only 50 hours in the first year. It should be on-going through your three years.
>
> There was not an option for actual language learning which was a major disappointment.
>
> What we have learnt has been poorly taught, ie the class highly motivated at the beginning of the course but at the end everyone is very disappointed. My level of competency has not improved at all and I'm very disillusioned. (This applies to third-year optional course only. The compulsory Maori studies programme in the first year was very valuable. We learned lots of waiata suitable for classroom situations.)

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[7] Criticisms about the Maori Studies department made by students in their final year were similar to those made by students we interviewed in their first year. It should be noted that many of these students did not take courses in the Maori Studies department in their second and third year so that criticisms they made in their final year probably reflect their earlier experiences. The department in subsequent years may well have taken account of earlier criticisms.

> I took an extra 50-hour course to help fulfil my need to learn more. However, the course was very relaxed, a lot of time was wasted and even looking at available resources was rushed.
>
> I would have liked Maori to have been integrated into more subject areas just as we should be doing in the classroom.
>
> I expected to come out of college knowing quite a bit of general conversational Maori. I found the multicultural studies lectures to really be a waste of time. The Maori history lectures were interesting but the language lectures were terrible - all we did was sing songs.
>
> If you tried to learn and you didn't have skills or weren't actually Maori, the support was limited. I felt the department kept their culture to themselves and I felt that I was resented as a European. I didn't dare to push the issue for fear of being labelled culturally insensitive.
>
> Although I am currently doing a Maori EST and thoroughly enjoying what I am learning, I feel it should have a much greater part in our education as primary teachers, for example, practical stuff that can go straight into the classroom.
>
> The Maori programme at the college is not adequate to cater for the beginning teacher's needs. Time is wasted and little is learnt - a big overhaul is needed for Maori to become successfully taught to us so we can pass it on to the children in our class.
>
> So many subjects I would like to have majored in including Maori, but plan to pick up the language, that is, training, at a later date.

Ten students mentioned that they were prevented from doing as much Maori as they would have liked because of other curriculum choices they made, and lack of time. An equal number, who were keen to further their knowledge of Maori, referred to courses they had taken outside the college - university, night school and a summer holiday course at the completion of the college course.

Wellington

Twenty-eight students added a comment. These tended to fall into one of four categories:

- Criticism of the department, or of individual lecturers, for courses students considered to be poorly run and not in sufficient depth. (Several commented on the improvement in the third year, particularly with MS 300.)
- Frustration that courses were not sufficiently graded to cater for students with different backgrounds and experience.
- Criticism of the department's view that it was not the college's responsibility to cater for students' language acquisition.
- Limitations on the number of courses students could take in Te Wahanga Maori because of timetabling constraints and the limits placed on options.

Typical of the range of students' comments were:

> The courses available were too shallow and too far apart to learn much.
>
> I feel this department needs to be more specific and certain members need to get their act together.
>
> The message that I have received from the Maori Studies department is, "We don't teach language acquisition." But if they don't, who does? I feel this is a major failing of the Maori department as it perpetuates ignorance of Maori language teachers. Teachers are not confident in Maori so will ignore it. Merely teaching culture is not enough.
>
> Due to having to meet constraints and majors and minor units - you aren't able to fit other curriculum subjects in.
>
> A big weakness at Wellington College of Education is that it does not cater adequately for the needs of those more advanced than basic Maori - MS100, MS140.
>
> This college says it has equity but it has not offered courses for beginners, middle, or fluent teachers. It has not budgeted for this.
>
> Extremely poor organisation of lectures. Lecturers knew their material but were not good teachers.

Christchurch

Nineteen students added a comment. More than half of these focused on the fact that, in the students' view, the department is understaffed and insufficient courses are taught.[8] The courses offered are poorly run and taught and not integrated into the rest of the college programme. A few students commented on their own level of competence and other measures they had taken to improve their skills, for example, to take a course at the university or polytechnic. Typical of the range of comments were:

> The Maori department is understaffed and not utilised effectively in the the third year especially. However, it is very essential.
>
> We are taught that Maori should be integrated into a school programme, yet it is taught as a separate subject at college and other courses don't make provision in their course to show any integration. Awareness of ESOL is stressed but we need the Maori language so that we feel confident using it.
>
> Opportunity has been there, however it clashed with more accepted "important" subjects such as maths and reading.

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[8] In fact courses in 1991 and 1992 were undersubscribed. Additional staffing has been allocated in 1992.

The Maori course focused on singing, flax making and colouring in resources.

Only as much as a short course would allow. I would have liked to learn more.

I feel the hours given in the first two years are not sufficient. The courses need to be longer in order for students to gain confidence.

In the first year I took Maori as a subject study course and in the second year we had Maori curriculum study, but this year no courses have been available so I ended up going to varsity and completing Maori 105.

ASSESSMENT

In our last report, *Windows on Teacher Education Phase 2*, we included a discussion on both student views of college assessment and some of the general issues relating to assessment in the colleges. In their third year of study students were again asked about assessment, either in the interviews or in the questionnaire. The areas covered were

- student views of the methods used at the college to assess them
- whether assessment had helped to improve their performance
- student confidence to self-evaluate
- student ability to assess children in the classroom.

Assessment of the Students by the College

In the third-year interviews students were asked if they had any general comments to make about assessment at the college. Of the 74 students who were interviewed, 11 (nine from Auckland and one each from Christchurch and Wellington) made positive comments about the assessment system. They liked the non-competitive nature of assessment at the college, appreciated the formative nature of the assessment, liked being told at the beginning of courses what they were expected to achieve and how this was to be assessed, and felt the lecturers were generally approachable and helpful if they needed individual help.

Of the remaining students, no single issue was of common concern to students from all three colleges.

Auckland

Apart from the nine students who were happy with the assessment at college the remaining 21 students made various criticisms of assessment at the college. No single issue was mentioned by more than six students.

> Maths it's marks. That's okay because I know what is a pass and what is a fail. A lot of it's pretty good because if you know what you're aiming for and how much work you have to do, I like it as it is. I miss the little letters you get though. Like in my first year you get handed a thing, you're doing really well, keep going. That was really encouraging but they stopped it.

> No I'm happy with the way we're assessed based on personal development and you

> know with the lecturers doing most of the assessing. I haven't really been a fan of peer assessment because I find with being friends and that you seem to regorge the same positive stuff all the time and often it's not really that constructive. I have no problems with that with regards to our education, they left it very open on how we're going to be assessed. And that's still very up in the air and it's all under negotiation. Every class seems to be different so that's still very open-ended, but as far as everything else goes, no, I think it's great. Assignments, building up resources, things like that, it's great.

Students most commonly criticised what they saw as the lack of standards in the college, the 'soft' treatment of students who were consistently not turning up to lectures or not getting work in on time. The next most frequent comment was about the inconsistencies of the assessment system. Students complained about changes being made to the marking system from one year to another, about the lack of consistency between lecturers in marking assignments and the confusion caused by different systems of marking in the college (norm-referenced and criterion-referenced).

Wellington

The main concern of students was the huge gap they saw between 'satisfactory' and 'outstanding', the two categories they were awarded when being assessed. They felt that 'satisfactory' gave the impression of having done the bare minimum to get through a course. Many students felt that the effort they and others put into their assignments deserved more recognition but they acknowledged they were not up to the level required for an outstanding. They would like to see some categories between what they regarded as two extremes.

There was also a feeling that lecturers did not always know students well enough to assess them in the detailed way that was required on the assessment forms.

Christchurch

The concern expressed most frequently by students was that the assessment system would not help them in their search for a job. Their comments about this focused on two main areas: the lack of consistency in the college where some courses are assessed by awarding grades and others with a pass/fail; and the disadvantage they feel compared with graduates from other colleges who have graded systems of assessment and who will be able to offer employers examples of 'A' grades whereas they only have a 'pass'.

> Well, at the moment in all my courses I am doing, only one course is graded and that is social studies. All the other courses are just pass/fail. And that used to really bug me, because that happened last year as well. Like I'd do - whenever I do something I always try and do a really, really good job of it and I hand it in and I get a pass and someone else would just chuck a few things together and they'd get a pass as well. And the thing is how do you differentiate between that person's work and my work. I mean I want credit for what I've done but on a piece of paper we've both done the same. [It still bothers you?] Yes, it does bother me. I don't know that I agree with A, B, C and D's or not, but if when I'm going for a job I'd rather have an A than a pass.

> Yes, well this year in our final year after having got A B C passes for most of our courses last year, most of the courses this year are just pass/fail. It's ridiculous, I mean this is the transcript that schools will be looking at and if they see someone get a pass, then it doesn't give them any indication of the capability of that person, or whether they were prepared to put the work in. And that is what A, B, C does.

A few students were unhappy with a system that did not recognise good quality work or effort, but awarded everyone a pass regardless, and felt a distinct lack of motivation as a result.

In summary, third-year students' comments about assessment focused on three issues:

- assessment should accurately reflect the performance of students at college
- the college should firmly enforce standards and should deal with students who do not come up to those standards
- the assessment system should provide students with written documentation which will help them to compete successfully for jobs.

The first two categories of comments reflect a concern for fairness. Students believe that if they work hard and achieve certain standards, they expect this to be recognised. It is unfair if students who do not achieve certain standards are given the same reward. These same comments can, however, also be related to those which state explicitly that they would like the assessment to be presented so that students can use it to help them compete for jobs. At the time these students were interviewed, a few months away from applying for their first teaching position, one of their major concerns was their ability to get a job at the end of the course. These students were particularly concerned about jobs because they were the first group of students to complete their training without the security of a guaranteed two-year teaching position. They had to apply for and win positions in competition with other applicants. Furthermore, teaching positions were scarce, which made competition on the open market even more worrying.

Another aspect of students' concerns with standards in the college is that their achievements are not downgraded by a perception, particularly by outsiders, that the course is so easy that anyone can pass, or that students do pass regardless of performance. This perhaps leads to an over-emphasis by the students on marks and grades. The colleges rightly point out that the half-yearly assessment meetings are important in identifying students who are not performing up to expectation and counselling them out of the course, a process which no student commented on.

Although the students' preoccupation with jobs is understandable, especially during this final year of training, we would not suggest that their concerns should lead to a major refocussing of the purposes of assessment at the colleges. On the other hand, their concerns should be taken seriously by the colleges. Over the three years of the study, of course, students emphasise different aspects of the assessment system at different stages of their training.

Do Students Feel That Assessment Has Helped To Improve Their Performance?

As well as offering a general comment on assessment, students interviewed were asked whether the assessments they had received, both in their courses at college and while on section, had improved their performance. Students appreciate the formative assessment that is part of the course but some students made suggestions for improvement. These included better timing of the assessment, greater honesty in lecturer assessment of students, and more constructive criticism from lecturers and associate teachers.

Auckland

Half of the students interviewed felt that the assessment for the college courses did help to improve their performance and half thought it did not or were uncertain. Those who said it did help usually did so because the marking system gives them some incentive to do better; students strive for a merit or distinction or try and better their previous marks in a subject. Students also appreciate the constructive comments offered by some lecturers and the clear setting out of what has to be achieved.

On the other hand, those students who thought assessments make no difference to performance gave a variety of reasons: the inconsistency of the marking both within and between departments, which makes any extra effort futile; lack of time to do better because of other commitments; assignments which are not relevant to classroom practice so that students are not motivated to further their professional knowledge. A few students compared the system at college unfavourably with their experience at university.

Wellington

Nineteen of the 23 students interviewed replied to this question. Fourteen felt that the assessment practices did *not* help them to improve their performance at college. The main reason given was that assessment was seen as a statement of what the student had achieved but not as an aid to improve student learning.

> I haven't really ever thought about them [that is, assessment] in that way. I see them much more as something that you get at the end of a course. A lot of lecturers don't really say, "Oh, you could work at this area", or anything like that. They're sort of mostly saying the positive things that you've done already.

These students, along with a few others, felt that the assessment would be more useful for their professional development if it occurred earlier in a course and was intended as an aid to learning. Students added, however, that the comments lecturers put on assignments, rather than the report forms used, were often useful in helping to improve their performance. Part of the assessment policy at Wellington is that assessment should primarily be formative. Many students do not seem to find it useful for that purpose because of the timing of the assessment. Students felt that where assignments were marked at the end of courses, they could not take up suggestions about areas for improvement.

Christchurch

Eleven of the 21 students interviewed felt that the assessment they had had for their college courses had helped them to improve because:

- marks awarded for assignments gave them something to aim at in subsequent work
- comments included on assignments provided the students with good feedback.

Where lecturers took the trouble to make constructive comments, these were well received by students.

On the other hand, nine students felt that assessment, as it is currently structured, did not help them to improve their performance. As with Wellington students this was because assessments were given at the end of a course. Other students felt that work required for assignments was often not relevant to the skills they would need for the classroom, and so assignments were completed in relative isolation.

Assessment on Teaching Experience

A greater proportion of students from all three colleges felt that the constructive feedback they got from visiting lecturers and associate teachers while on section had led directly to improvements in their performance.

Auckland

Two-thirds of the students felt that assessments they had received on teaching sections led to improvements in their performance. Students' comments focused mainly on the direct usefulness of assessment on section, which was seen by all these students as positive, helpful and constructive.

> Well, everything's positive and you don't get cut down to size or told, "Don't do that." It's always, "Try something else" - critical advice, you know. I find that really useful instead of making me feel that I should have done something a particular way they'll say, "You tried it this way and it didn't quite work, now try it this way instead and see how it goes."

When students did have problems on teaching practice sections they were generally given help.

Seven students, however, felt that their assessments on teaching section had not helped to improve their performance. Typically, this was because they were being placed in a classroom that was not their own, with children they did not know, for too short a time. They were expected to be a 'real' teacher in an artificial situation. They all gave examples of being in an unsatisfactory classroom where they were not given enough help from visiting lecturers or associates neither of whom, in the students' opinion, fully appreciated the situation, and were unable to give any constructive help.

Wellington

All the students were positive about the benefits of assessment on section. Once again, they liked the direct and immediate comments on their own classroom practice. A few students had reservations, the main one being that, to be useful, comments should be honest. A few students felt that some associates were 'too nice' when writing down comments on a student's performance, rather than being critical in a constructive way.

Christchurch

Most students were positive about the direct relevance to their own progress of assessments on section:

> They've definitely helped because they're related directly to something that I've actually done as far as my teaching goes and the reports that the associate writes are good. You talk about it together and she will be writing down things that you know you can relate to directly.

Three Christchurch students recounted a negative experience they had had with associates or visiting lecturers which led them to hold a few reservations, although they still expressed general support for the system. The one student who thought assessments on section had not been helpful felt that she knew better than any outside person what she was trying to achieve in the classroom and how well she was reaching her goals.

Self-Evaluation

Most lecturers aim to encourage their students to become 'reflective teachers', professionals constantly reviewing their own practice. In the questionnaire, which students completed in their final year, they were asked two questions about evaluation:

- how confident they felt about reviewing their own performance as a teacher
- how confident they felt about using evaluations of children's work to improve their own teaching programmes.

It is clear that most students believe they have these skills. In both cases, 94% of students said they were either confident or very confident.

Assessing Children in the Classroom

Students were also questioned about their ability to assess children's work in the classroom by indicating on a list of curriculum areas which three they felt *most* confident to assess and which three they felt *least* confident to assess. Table 21 summarises the students' responses.

Table 21

Subjects Students Feel Most and Least Confident to Assess

Subjects	**MOST** confident to assess % of students (N=289)	**LEAST** confident to assess % of students (N=289)
Reading	76	9
Mathematics	70	15
Physical education	50	8
Written language	45	8
Art	29	21
Social studies	27	19
Science	26	22
Oral language	24	11
Education outside the classroom	22	10
Music	20	37
Health	18	15
Maori	15	44
Drama	15	31
Computers in the classroom	14	40

COMMENTS ON TABLE 21

- For most subjects, between 40 and 50% of students did not tick either category. The exceptions were reading and mathematics where 85% of students responded. This compares with, for example, health, where only 33% of students responded.
- Students were more likely to tick subjects they felt confident to assess than those they did *not* feel comfortable about assessing.
- Subjects which a large proportion of students felt confident about tended to be the ones that only a small proportion did *not* feel confident about, for example, reading and maths. The reverse, however, was not necessarily true.
- Reading and mathematics were two subjects that 70% or more of the students felt *most* confident to assess. The well-developed nature of assessment techniques in these subject areas were referred to in our earlier report (see *Windows on Teacher Education Phase 2*, p. 109). Reading and mathematics are subjects with comprehensive primary school programmes which include details of the assessment and evaluation to be used at each stage. This is not to say that students are not taught assessment procedures for other subject areas.
- The areas that students overall feel *most* or *least* confident to assess are also the ones they are *most* or *least* looking forward to teaching (see p. 34). The exception to this is mathematics. Seventy percent of students say they feel confident to assess

120

mathematics, but only 38% of students say they are *most* looking forward to teaching the subject.

* There were some significant differences by college. No Christchurch students chose mathematics as one of the subjects they felt *least* confident to assess, ($\chi^2 = 9.345$) and only one chose social studies ($\chi^2 = 7.279$).

Through the questionnaire, students were also asked to indicate, from a range of classroom tasks, those which they felt most or least confident to carry out (see p. 71). The tasks that could be regarded as assessment tasks - keeping records, evaluating children's work and assessing their progress - were those that fewer students ticked as feeling most confident about. Conversely, more students felt least confident to carry out these tasks compared with other classroom tasks. When asked how confident they feel about assessing children's ongoing progress and evaluating children's work in relation to all the other tasks they would be expected to carry out as a teacher in the classroom, 64% of students feel confident about evaluating children's work and 58% about assessing children's progress. More importantly perhaps, over a third of students do not feel confident about either of these two tasks (34% of students do not feel confident about evaluating children's work and 37% do not feel confident about assessing children's progress).

Students in our interview sample were also asked how confident they felt about assessing children's progress in the classroom. Consistent with the answers given in the questionnaire, most of the students we interviewed were 'confident' or 'very confident' about assessing children's progress in the classroom (see p. 71), although, as we have just seen, they were less confident in assessing children than in carrying out a number of other classroom tasks.

Issues raised by students:

- it is important to assess children before and after teaching a topic to measure their progress and the effectiveness of the teaching
- each child must be treated as an individual in terms of the progress they make
- the importance of setting clear and measurable objectives
- some subject areas lend themselves more easily to assessment than others
- there is a greater variety of assessment methods available to teachers than students imagined
- the importance of systematically documenting assessment
- students need more practical experience in assessing children. Many students indicated that their ability to assess children would take time to develop and would occur when they were in their own classroom. They had been given some tools to make a start.

Why do students feel confident about assessing individual subject areas and yet say they are not so confident about assessment in relation to other classroom tasks?

At this stage in their training they are possibly displaying too great a reliance on measurement rather than looking at assessment in broader terms. In both their own assessment and the assessment of children, the students seem to be relying on measurement tools to give an 'objective' measure of what someone does or does not know, rather than being confident about using these tools as just one input into a professional judgement of what is known and what needs to be learnt. It could be asked whether, at this stage in their training, this is a reasonable situation for them to be in. Do they need to feel confident about the mechanisms before they can begin to think about the reasons behind what they will be doing in the classroom?

Tracking Student Performance

One of the research questions for this study is to investigate and report upon the performance of a sample of students during their course in terms of the assessment the colleges themselves make. Ministry officials hoped we would be able to track a sample of students through their college courses, and look at the assessments the college was making of their performance. It was assumed that we would be able to make some judgements about whether the students were performing up to expectations, using, as a predictor of performance, the evaluation of students carried out when college selections were made. One of the reasons given for undertaking this analysis was that the colleges' assessment systems might not be sufficiently stringent to identify students who were not performing up to expectations and were not suitable for teaching.

Having considered the system of assessment at the three colleges and the college records of students in our interview sample, we have come to the conclusion, agreed to by the ministry, that this cannot be done in the way that was originally envisaged. The reasons for this are:

- the nature of the student intake
- the purposes of assessment at the colleges
- changes to college assessment practices.

The Nature of the Student Intake

Our experience of the cohort of students in our study suggests that, in terms of the selection criteria used at that time, they were of high quality. In many cases students had higher than the minimum academic qualifications required. Interview panels also looked for personal qualities and previous experience which they felt indicated a student's teacher potential.

The process used for selecting our cohort of students was subject to some criticism at the time, and changes have been made since then, but throughout our study we have been impressed with the calibre of the students. Given the quality of the applicants to the colleges, one could reasonably assume that most, if not all, of the selected students were capable of becoming good teachers.

The Purposes of Assessment at the Colleges

The college policies on assessment, as described in the appendices of our last report, lean heavily towards formative assessment, and are geared towards helping the student learn to be a teacher. This means that assessments made about students are not always in a form that would enable us to judge the students' performance in relation to their peers or their qualifications on entry.

The Nature of Assessment at the Colleges

The purpose of assessment has an effect on the nature of the assessment at the colleges. Many of the courses at the three colleges are pass/fail; marks do not indicate how well a student has performed, merely whether they have passed or failed. Where assessment for courses is criteria-based it is possible to make comparisons of student performance. However, as students take a range of courses to fulfil their college requirements it is still difficult to compare assessment between colleges or between students. Each student is likely to be enrolled in a different series of courses from most other students. Each college has a mixture of compulsory and optional courses. Each department decides, within the college policy on assessment, how its courses are to be graded. Within some departments, because the decision is left to the individual lecturer, there can be a mixture of graded and pass/fail courses. Nor have course assessment procedures remained static over the three years of our study. Changes have been made as colleges go through the process of clarifying their assessment procedures. Students have given us examples of assessment for the same course changing from year to year. For some students a course has been assessed as pass/fail and for others it has been graded.

Students' performance on section is also assessed. The section reports are designed to monitor students' progress in developing the skills necessary to be a good teacher. Teaching skills are identified on the report and the associate teacher is asked to look at each student at the beginning of the section and again at the end and say whether there has been any improvement. Associates are expected to help the student make this improvement. Assessment is clearly intended to be formative and associate teachers do not attempt to make summative judgements about the trainees' skills, although they are required to make some statement about what is 'satisfactory'.

The colleges, however, have mechanisms to identify all students whose performance is not satisfactory. It can be seen from Table 1 on p. 8 that a number of students at each college have resigned from the course, some because they have been identified as unsuitable for teaching. Staff meetings held twice a year are important mechanisms for the colleges to monitor student performance on the course. At these meetings all students are assessed and any problems identified. The students are contacted, alerted to the concerns expressed by staff and involved in any decision to resolve the problem. A student may decide, sometimes with the encouragement of the college, to resign.

Assessment profiles of three Christchurch students are given below to illustrate how these procedures work in practice. In Table 22 the course marks of two students who were enrolled for the two-year course are compared to illustrate the point that it is very difficult to compare students because of the different courses taken and the mixture of A, B, C graded courses and pass/fail courses. Table 23 summarises the record of a student who was not performing to the required standard.

Table 22

Examples of Typical Student Assessment

Courses Taken	Grades Obtained	
YEAR ONE	STUDENT A	STUDENT B
Professional Studies		
Education 105/106	A/B	A+/A+
Educational Media	P	P
Multi-cultural Studies	B	A+
Curriculum Studies		
Mathematics	A	A
Art and Craft	A	A+
Music	B	A-
Social Studies	P	P
Science	B+	A
Reading	A	A
Language	A	A
Physical Education	A	A
Subject Studies		
Mathematics		A
YEAR TWO		
Professional Studies		
Professional Studies 3	P	P
Teaching Studies		
ARTS301	P	P
LANG332	P	
EDMC301	P	P
HEAL301		P
LANG331		P
MTHS301	P	P
MTHS302	B+	A
MTHS303	A-	
EDMC304	P	
READ307	P	P
SOSC304	P	P
SCIE306	P	
SCIE307		P
OENV301		P
DRMA304		P
READ303		P
MUSC302		P

READ301		P
Education Studies		
EDCN331	P	
EDCN346	P	
EDCN349	P	
EDCN339		P
EDCN333		P
General Education		
MUSC251	B+	
EDMC373	P	
MAUR331		P

When the two students whose assessment profiles are given in Table 22 are compared there is little to distinguish their performance on college courses. Both students completed their sections satisfactorily. They have taken different courses, especially in their second year. It is their choice of courses which would probably determine whether they were selected for any particular job. The employer would be choosing between two potentially good teachers.

Table 23 summarises the course assessment of a student who was causing concern, and eventually resigned from the college during his first year.

Table 23
Example of Course Assessment of Student Whose Performance was not Satisfactory

Courses Taken		Grades Obtained
EDCN	105/1	B
HEAL	101/1	E*
SOSC	101/1	B+
LANG	111/1	P
MAUR	101/1	P
MTHS	151/1	B-
PHED	151/1	B-
PROF	110/1	I*
SCIE	101/1	I*

* E=fail, I=incomplete

This student was identified as a major concern. Those involved in the staff meeting when the student's performance was discussed also gave their views on his performance. A senior member of the team was delegated to follow up these concerns with the student.

This student did not perform up to standard in three of his courses, but it was his relationships with children and other adults that was the subject of most of the comments and was the major cause of concern.

These examples are taken from the records of Christchurch students, but the points they illustrate apply to the other colleges.

Student Profiles

Summative assessments of students' performance is given at the end of the course in the form of student profiles but these do not compare one student's performance with another. Rather, they describe the achievements each student has made during their time at college. They are not in a form that would be useful for the type of exercise envisaged by the ministry, which involves making judgements about standards reached by students.

Changes to College Assessment Practices

All three colleges reviewed their assessment procedures immediately before or during our study. These changes were detailed in our earlier report (see *Windows On Teacher Education, Phase 2*) and included the development of more courses that were criterion- rather than norm-referenced and more student self-assessment. Although we do not have a detailed knowledge of the procedures before 1989, the assessment procedures the colleges have instituted during our study in keeping with their policies, are geared primarily towards helping students learn.

Although it was not possible to answer the particular research question as originally framed, we believe that the information we have collected from the students, both in the interviews and the questionnaires, has been valuable in

- highlighting the students' reaction to the assessments made of them
- pinpointing their expectations of assessment
- highlighting where these expectations break down
- giving some idea of what students know about assessing children
- making possible links between student assessment and pupil assessment.

College Reports or Profiles

An important end product of assessment at the college is the college report or profile which students receive upon completion of their course.

We asked the students two questions about their final college report or profile - whether they thought the profile accurately reflected their performance as a student, and whether they thought it would help them get a job.

Overall, nearly two-thirds of the students, 61%, thought their college profile accurately reflected their performance as a student, 13% were 'not sure', and nearly a quarter, 24%, thought it did not. Students could add a comment about the accuracy of their profiles.

Students Who Were Satisfied With Their Profiles
About a third of the students who were satisfied with their profile added a comment. About half of these commented on how well they thought their profile matched them and their performance, for example:

> Was quite personal which I am happy about. Identified my personal strengths well. (Wellington)
>
> I can honestly say I have worked extremely hard over the last three years - my report reflects this. (Wellington)
>
> My tutor has used information from college reports, her observations while on section, oral reports from associates as well as her knowledge of me as a person. I am very pleased with the way I was consulted about the report. (Christchurch)
>
> My tutor and I have a good rapport and have known each other over my three years at college. I was pleased with my report. (Auckland)
>
> I believe my tutor was very conscious of maintaining the reputation of the college by writing fair and accurate reports. I cannot say the same of other tutors. (Auckland)
>
> Reflects my talents, skills and personality for teaching. (Auckland)

About an equal number of the students who thought their profile accurate added qualifying comments which echoed those made by students who did *not* think so well of their profiles. The three most common criticisms of the student profiles were that:

* Profiles tend to be rather standard, did not differentiate between students, and could apply equally well to others. As one student put it, 'Twink out the name and it could be one of many.'
* Profiles tend to be very general and are not as specific and detailed as some students would like.
* Profiles may be written by lecturers students feel do not know them well. This is particularly the case when students have had several tutors during their time at college.

Students Who Were Not Satisfied With Their Profiles
Typical comments were:

> It's very broad. It doesn't say anything about my maths minor. My teaching report gives more information on my teaching abilities. (Wellington)
>
> Very brief, poorly written, little consideration of past performance, that is, no consultation with previous section reports, college marks, previous professional studies tutor. The accuracy of reports, professionalism and standard varied markedly between tutor groups. (Christchurch)

I think the report is not specifically about me - it could belong to anybody - a bit general. (Auckland)

The people writing it had little interaction with me. It does not take into consideration things like three part-time jobs so I could keep on with my studies. (Wellington)

My profile is written by a tutor who I have only had in my third year. Tutors should stay with the same group for three or four years so that they can see our development. In the third year tutor groups do not have subjects which they take as a group so it is hard for tutors to monitor our development. (Christchurch)

My tutor has changed over four times since the start of college, and they don't really get to know you well enough. I feel that the lecturers do not either, twice a week for a total of three hours isn't much time to adequately make judgements of people. (Auckland)

My tutor did not know my name halfway through this year. She admitted she knew nothing about me. I was described as being quiet and reserved, which my colleagues definitely denied. Profiles were similar and mine was not very informative, particularly about my personality. My tutor should never have written my report, in fact she didn't. She got me to write practically all of it in note form. She put it into sentence form and signed it. (Auckland)

My tutor discussed and wrote with myself relevant profile content. Other students (not in my tutorial group) have complained of the inconsistency of profile writing among tutors. (Christchurch)

Comments were taken from my major postings reports, information was also inaccurate. All reports seem to be the same as other people's. (Wellington)

Performance as a student - yes, but not as a teacher. (Auckland)

I thought it relied too heavily on my art ability and my happy, smiley appearance. I have many other excellent qualities as well. (Auckland)

No, I believe all college reports are basically similar and do not reflect the attendance and commitment of students to their teacher training. I know people have received passes for courses where they have not met the criteria to pass and they also have negotiated comments off their profile that reflected this. (Christchurch)

Positive waffle. (Auckland)

Student Views on Whether Their College Profile Would Help Them to Get a Job

Regardless of whether they felt their profile accurately reflected their performance, students were not particularly confident that their college profile would help them to get a job. Overall, 42% said 'yes', 41% were 'not sure', and 16% said 'no'.

Students Who Answered 'Yes'

Several of these students already had a job and had been told by the school principal that their profile had been helpful. Others commented on the professionalism and accuracy of their profile. Others said that everything helps in a tight job market and provided the profile is accurate and positive it should be useful. The reservations of other students were similar to those who said they did not think their profiles would be helpful.

Students Who Answered 'No' or 'Not Sure'

The students' comments tended to echo those they had already made about the quality of their profiles - namely, that they were too general and not sufficiently specific to distinguish one student from another. Profiles also tended to be too bland. Because lecturers hesitated to make critical comments about poor students, students who performed well were penalised.

A few students said they did not know if their profile would be helpful because they had no way of knowing on what basis boards of trustees made appointments. The usefulness of the profile might also depend on specifications for a particular job. Other students, anxious or bitter about the lack of jobs, did not feel that the profiles, however positive, were likely to be helpful when so few jobs were available.[9]

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[9] A recent study carried out in Auckland suggests that although principals find the student profiles helpful, 'issues of "blandness", and lack of specific information limit their usefulness to prospective employers' (see Cameron, M., Grudnoff, L. (1992). *From College to ...?* Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research, ***set*** No. 2, item 15).

THE COLLEGES' TUTORIAL SYSTEMS

The Colleges' Tutorial Systems

Each of the colleges has a tutorial system where students can come together regularly in small groups, or consult tutors individually. We asked the students we interviewed what they thought of the tutorial system in their college. As the systems are organised differently at each college, our findings are presented by college.

Auckland

The 1991 college calendar states:

> Tutor Groups
> Each intake of students is divided into groups which meet at least once a week with the same staff member when students are in College. First and second year students are in tutor groups as part of their Professional Practice course.

The designated functions of tutor groups are:

- to provide for each trainee a staff member who has the individual's progress at College as a major concern and to whom trainees may turn for advice on personal or professional matters.
- to enable the tutor to guide placement during teaching experience in schools and to monitor each trainee's progress in teaching skills.
- to provide brief statements of performance and progress for the central records after each teaching experience, having considered the Associate Teacher's report, the visiting lecturer's report, the student's file and an interview with each student.
- to ensure that information contained in the Admin Memo is communicated weekly to all students so they may be aware of administrative matters and involved in extra-curricular activities leading to their growth as beginning teachers.
- to provide a formal means of contact between students and the Auckland College of Education Students Association.
- to provide a social focus if students wish it.

The tutorial system is a good system

Nearly two-thirds of the students interviewed thought the system was a good one because in their experience:

- their own tutor knew them well, was concerned for their welfare and interested in their progress
- the members of the tutorial group enjoyed coming together, knew each other well, and in some cases organised social activities together
- it was an effective way of passing on college administrative information.

Examples of students' comments:

> Excellent, because you've got somewhere you can go and say, "Help"! It's nice to have someone you can talk to if you've got any problems, or you don't like your section. I've got a brilliant tutor, he's excellent. I think it's a really good system.
>
> It's really good, the way they stick with you for the whole three years and then write up a report at the end of the training. And you meet them every week and discuss things. My tutor is always available if you've got a question or need help. He's always there for you. One of the better things about when you're at college is the tutor system. It's good.
>
> They are great. When we first came to college we were in a group and that same group was in just about everything together. We had all our lectures together. In the second year there were only about four of us out of the core group who were together and this year hardly any of us are together. So the tutorials are a great time to get back and meet up with people and a chance to just talk in general to the tutor. We have shared lunches and barbecues and things like that at the end of the term. It's really good. ... It's also a chance to focus on what is going on around the college and filling out any forms. Also, I'm having problems with my class at the moment and I've told my tutor that I'm bored stiff this year so we've talked about it and it has helped. It probably depends on your relationship with your tutor. I've had mine for three years and he really knows me well and it's good.
>
> I'm really lucky with my tutor. You can just go and see her whenever you like and she'll always help you. She's really good. She always encourages you and I just feel really comfortable with her. She's a really nice person. I have the same tutor I had last year and she's been good because she was a lecturer of mine last year so she knows my work. She's been my visiting lecturer three times running and she has a really good knowledge of who I am and I think that's important in a visiting lecturer. It's no good having someone you've never seen before in your life who just comes out and says, "Oh well, that's good, great." And that's what they write on your report. This one knows my strengths and weaknesses and she's also concerned enough to want to know how I'm getting on. It's also good to have someone like her who you can go and say things are just going really badly at the moment because then you feel you have some support.

Problems with the System

A number of students who supported the system said there were problems from time to time. Similar issues were raised by students critical of the tutorial system. Most of these issues related to the lecturers but the students themselves sometimes contributed. The most frequently mentioned were:

- Too many changes of tutors over the three years. This was a particularly serious problem if the tutor did not know the students well and was then expected to write their final report
- Tutors who did not turn up to sessions, were late, or too busy to be of much help
- A boring and time-wasting way of dealing with administrative matters.

Other matters, raised in each case by two or three students only, were:

- Tutors who did not spend enough time looking at students' work, usually section reports, for which they were responsible
- Personality clashes between tutors and students. If this occurs students should be able to change their tutors
- Students may be reluctant to talk about their problems with tutors as the tutors will be writing their reports and will be influenced by students' own admissions of weaknesses
- Students also doing university work are often not available to attend tutor group meetings
- Students who are busy or just a bit 'bored with the whole scene', don't turn up.

Examples of students' comments which included criticisms:

> I think when they choose tutors they need to put them on a contract for longer than a flipping term because having a tutor for one term is just a waste of time. I haven't been to a tutorial all year although I have been to see him at other times. ...When I do go we just grab our sheets, read the admin memo, fill out the form and go, that's it. There's no discussion. ...I think being a third year I'm just a bit lazy because I know what they're all about now. Plus the fact that I'm not always here, so I say, "Should I go all the way into college for a five-minute meeting?"
>
> The one I've got now is a really tops lady. The guy I had in the first year was quite helpful but after section I'd bring my file in and he didn't look at it. He'd say, "Oh, I know you will have done the work." And I'd feel really slack because I'd put all this work into it. This year they actually read the file and put little comments on it. When they say they need your folder 48 hours before the meeting I think that's good because they read it and you know they actually know what you did on section.
>
> Well our tutor group is quite slack really because it's on a day when no-one has a

> class until 1 o'clock so not many people turn up. We just read admin memos and that's it. And if we're going on section we'll pick up our briefs - that's about all we've done.

> The tutorials themselves have been pretty pointless really. We eat lunch and chat and try to arrange something else but no one gets too keen. It's a strange sort of a thing. We've been together for three years and we've done very little together which a lot of other tutorials seem to do. No one seems to be keen to do anything outside of college. I think it's because a lot of people are at different stages. We've got a real mix. We've got married types like me and we've got 19-year-olds who are just experiencing being able to go to the pub and things like that. We've just got different priorities.

> The system is good. The only thing is with timetabling - it's a nuisance trying to fit university around it. But my tutor is brilliant.

> Well, I've got a good tutor but he's a very busy person. I get on well with him. I've got good rapport with him and I know if I've got a problem I can go to him but he's such a busy person that it's very hard to tie him down, to actually try and grab him. It's important to have someone there you can actually trust and certainly I've been lucky. I've had mine for two years and he's superb as far as being there and helping me when I've really needed it, but the regular meetings with tutors are very much straight in and straight out. He's hardly there - just hands out the memo and reads it. Occasionally he hasn't turned up but we realise that it's because he's busy. But we know as third years that if there was a big issue he would be there and get in touch with us.

Wellington

Staff in Wellington were interested in student reactions to two rather different support systems. The first was the student advisers, people students could go to to talk about professional or personal problems. In previous years these advisers had been responsible for a mixed group of students from each of the three years' intakes. The groups had met once a week. In 1991 this system was changed to advisers who were responsible for a group of students from one year's intake only. The adviser follows this group of students through the college course, so that each student should have the same adviser during their time at college.

The 1991 college calendar states:

> Students in pre-service programmes are allocated an adviser thoughout their College career. Time to meet with the adviser is scheduled weekly on Fridays. Students plan their courses in consultation with their adviser. Together they share the responsibility for ensuring that the course selected is a proper and responsible teacher education programme and that it meets the College requirements. Arrangements can be made with the Director of Programmes to change advisers if this is at any time thought necessary by the student or the adviser.

In a college document about the role of an adviser it states that the adviser:

- Is responsible primarily for the academic progress of a group (12 - 20) of trainees. In 1991 all groups are of the same year.
- Provides a communication channel between the staff and the trainees on academic matters-reports, as well as general college notices.
- Provides a discussion/support group as required. In some instances an adviser is the initial contact for students having difficulties - personal or academic.

Kaiarahi/Intake Supervisors
A quite separate system was that of the kaiarahi or intake supervisor for each year's intake. This lecturer approves courses and timetables for all students in the year group for which they are responsible and is available to answer student queries about their courses and related matters throughout the year.

The 1991 calendar states:

> During their pre-service training each group of students, AA1, AA2, AS3, A(B)1 and A(B)2, AK1 and AK2, AP1 and AP2, AS1 and AS2 has a Kaiarahi/Intake Supervisor. The Director of Primary Education co-ordinates this work.
>
> The role of these people is to work in association with advisers to provide support for the students. They also co-ordinate information about students' skills and progress from course assessments, observation and teaching experience, as well as initial information upon entry about the students' strengths and needs. Kaiarahi approve short-term leave of up to two weeks after discussion with the adviser and the student. They negotiate with staff as required to assist students in academic and personal matters. Their role is one of co-ordination, support and an overview of the needs of each specialised group in the College. They assist in identifying students who may be at risk.

Student Reaction
It is difficult from the student comments to get a clear impression of how a number of them reacted to these two college systems, particularly since, even in the middle of their third year, several of them seemed confused about the current practices.

The Advisers
When we asked students what they thought of the advisory system, the following points were made:

- At least three students had obviously not made any use of the system because they were not aware that it had been changed from the previous year. Other students were not sure whether they were meant to meet as a group or whether they were to see their advisers separately. One or two said they thought the choice was left over to individual advisers.

- At least five of those who did know the system had changed had not made any use of advisers during the year.
- Four students said they preferred the previous arrangement when students from the three year groups had come together. One student said she did not.
- Three or four students referred to the good personal support they had had from advisers.
- Several said it was important that students had the same adviser each year unless they had specifically asked for a change of adviser. There are problems if students feel their adviser does not really know them, particularly if they write final reports.
- Most students doing university work were not involved in the college system because they regarded the lecturer responsible for university studies as their personal adviser. This appeared to be satisfactory to them.

Examples of students' comments:

> Well, I wasn't quite sure what was happening but I thought that we weren't all mixed up together. I like mixing with the other year groups.
>
> It's not a very structured system. I don't see my adviser because we've never made a date. But I think, I'm not really sure what they're doing, whether they're changing - like we changed this year but we had the same one for the last two years. I'm not really sure. Are they like having you go to one one year, and another one the next? Do they actually do that?
>
> It's very frustrating to have been here for two years with the same adviser and then have to change advisers .... But apart from that it's good because the adviser that I've got is quite good. She's pretty casual about it and you just pop in and out. You don't have to be there at 12 on Friday, which is quite good. Probably not so good for the communication when we used to have those green sheets that went to advisers and I think that people sometimes miss out on things at college now. But I feel quite happy about advising and how they've changed it.
>
> We got new advisers for the third year but I don't know a lot of people who have actually gone and seen their adviser. [This student did not know whether they were meant to meet as a group or not.] I bump into my adviser and she says, "How's it going?" We don't meet formally every week or anything.
>
> We used to meet every Friday as a group. We had contact with first-, second- and third-years and I thought that was really good. This year we've only got third years. You got to know people the other way. I preferred it.
>
> I had a really good adviser but he had to leave so I got another one. There's a few of us who have had to shift around. I honestly don't think my adviser knows me. I don't feel confident about her speaking about me as she doesn't know me. She's made an effort and I went for an appointment just to see her and we just had a chat

about my strengths and weaknesses. ... But I don't know how the system works now. They keep on chopping and changing everything. ... We don't have to meet on Friday now which is good because that was a hassle when not everybody had classes.

Has the system changed? I haven't seen my adviser at all this year.

I've seen my adviser twice this year. ...I think it was better the way it was. It was much more enforced. ...It was like a whanau system. You got to know students across the board. You can do that as well within classes here which is really nice - it just means you have a closer bond with somebody.

I think mixing with first-, second- and third-years in a group didn't really work because there was a mixture of everyone there and you couldn't discuss what you wanted to. It's easier with just third-years, but I never go to a group anyway I prefer to talk to my tutor by myself.

Kaiarahi: Course intake supervisor

- At least five students did not know who we were talking about.
- About half of the remaining students said they had not made any use of her, but as it is not a requirement that they should, this is not necessarily a criticism. Rather, it may indicate that the college course is running smoothly, and students have no particular worries.
- Those who had made use of the kaiarahi were invariably impressed and thought the support she gave them as third-year students was excellent.

Examples of students' comments:

The intake supervisor for us is really good. She's a top person. I think you have to be a really special person to do it. At the start of the year she checked everyone's timetable for them, or she did for me, and I've been to see her a couple of times and she's always been good. She's busy, though.

I don't know about that because I've never used an intake supervisor. I think it's -- . That's how much I know. I think apparently they're quite good if you've got problems with your courses or if you want time off or things like that. My friend was having a lot of problems and they really helped her, so I think they're quite supportive. They've picked the right people to do the job.

Who's that now? There are two of them, aren't there? I think that you go to those people if you've got dire straits and need real help and your adviser can't help you, but I've not had to go to them. Whether that's what they're there for I'm not sure.

I've had no reason to go to them. I think they're the sort of people you go to if you want to take six months off college or have some reason to pull out for the time being,

> but want to come back. They're sort of top dogs. I think they're useful to have there if you need them, but I personally haven't had to use them.
>
> I think having an adviser and an intake supervisor is good because it gives you contact people that you can talk to and find out how your progress is going. I probably would have used my adviser more if I had trouble. In my first year I used the intake supervisor and she was really good. I think they're really important people to have - they are sort of fences before you get to the edge of the cliff.
>
> She gave me a hand at the beginning of the year just sorting my timetable out, but other than that I haven't had a lot to do with her, but she's helped other people out that I know of.

Christchurch

Christchurch differs from the other two colleges in that their tutorial system is a more integral part of the college course itself. The tutors, who are professional studies tutors, provide a programme for students' professional development as well as taking on some of the functions that tutors have in the other colleges, such as pastoral care and support. According to the 1991 course book professional studies is:

> A compulsory final-year course which assists students to assume responsibility for managing and justifying a class curriculum and for monitoring their own professional development. Professional Studies is closely linked with Teaching Practice.

The job description of professional studies tutors explains their function as to:

- provide professional guidance and support for individual students in their tutor group;
- deliver the prescribed professional studies course based on the core competencies;
- offer pastoral care to the students in their tutor group;
- monitor and systematically record individual student progress;
- report to prospective employers.

Students meet two to three times a week in a group with their professional studies tutors, and outside these times on an individual basis.

Students' Reaction to the Professional Studies Tutorial System

Almost without exception third-year Christchurch students support the tutorial system and are enthusiastic in their responses. The few who made negative comments were not critical of the system but of their experience with a particular tutor. As with most things at the college, so much depends on individual lecturers. It is clear, however, from the students' comments, that they believe the college has been particularly careful to select appropriate staff to be third-year tutors. The students appreciate the system because of:

- the professional competence of the tutors
- the practical assistance offered in the professional concerns of students
- the personal support received by students.

Examples of students' comments:

> I think it works very well. I haven't got any complaints against the tutorial system. I found this year to be great. I think it's important in the third year to have a tutor who is really highly organised and mine is. She has been able to give us all of the stuff which we're going to need for getting out at the end of the year and she hasn't been away from teaching that long so she knows people out there that she gets all this stuff off. We've been lucky in the amount of professional stuff that we've been given.
>
> I'm quite happy with it. I've got a really good tutor who helps us out an awful lot - any areas of need or anything like that, she's always willing to help us out. I've learnt a lot from her. This year has worked really well. I wouldn't say the last two did. While I enjoyed the last two years we never did any work - it was more of a chat session and this year I really feel that we are getting things out of it.
>
> I think this year is working very well because we are lucky enough to have a principal taking us as our tutor. He's used his entire staff at different stages to come in and work with us. So if we say we want help in reading he will bring in somebody that's a specialist in reading. Professional studies this year actually means something. In the last two years it's just been two hours off in the morning, a relaxing time. It's been fairly intensive this year, all very much geared towards our own development as teachers. The tutors have been the key aspect in that one. Last year they just seemed to be there so when we griped about college they'd go and do something about it. This year they still do that but we don't have as many gripes. It's more, "How can we help you?"

Problems with the Tutorial System

Any problems with the tutorial system relate, in the students' view, to the quality of individual tutors. The student in the last quotation referred to a school principal as tutor and how helpful this was. This ties in with frequent student comments about the need for lecturers to be in touch with the classroom. In this instance, however, some students believe there is a problem in using someone from a school as a tutor when one of a tutor's roles is to help students with in-college matters, for example:

> A third-year tutor should have had a lot of experience with tutor groups beforehand. At present I have a professional studies tutor who's just come straight out of the school and he's very good, but I don't think he really can cater for all our needs. I think there should be someone who is experienced within the college. It's not his fault, it's just that he hasn't been given the direction from the top.

Another student who felt they had an inexperienced tutor commented:

The system is a bit hit and miss. If you get one of the extra good or experienced ones then you do better, you know more about what's going on around the place. If you get a brand new one and you are learning as he's learning, that's hard. Actually, I feel quite sorry for ours because we've got a very tough group and they're not giving him a fair go. He's a very soft-spoken person and he gets drowned out, so I feel sorry for him.

UNIVERSITY STUDY

One hundred and twenty-three of the 289 trainees who were finishing their three-year course had attended the university at the same time as taking the college course. Of these, 12 had gained enough credits to complete a degree and another 111 had partially completed degrees while at college. These students were asked about their intentions regarding their degree. Their responses are summarised in Table 24.

Table 24
Students' Future Plans for University Study

Future plans	No. of students (N = 111)
Complete degree in the future, but unsure when	58
Complete degree part-time while teaching	29
Teach for a few years and then take time off to complete degree	14
Will finish degree *before* starting teaching	7

NOTE: A few students ticked more than one option.

COMMENTS ON TABLE 24

- The seven students who intend to finish their degrees before starting to teach are from Auckland.
- Twelve students do not intend to finish their degrees at all.
- Christchurch students are the most committed to finishing their degrees.

Had Students Made the Right Decision?

The students who took university courses were asked whether they felt they had made the right decision about university study. They were also asked whether they would make the same decision if they were starting their course over again.

- The 12 students who had finished their degrees all felt that they had made the right decision regarding university study and would make the same decision if they were to start the course over again.

- Of the 111 who took university courses but have not yet finished a degree:

  - the majority, 73, think they made the right decision
  - six feel they did *not* make the right decision and are not happy to have taken courses at the university at the same time as the college course
  - 32 students did not respond.

When asked whether they would make the same decision if they were to start their course of training over again, 55 of these 73 students would make the same decision and 17 would not.

Students Who Did *Not* Attend University

One hundred and sixty-six students did not take university courses while at college. Most of them gave a combination of reasons for this. Table 25 summarises the students' reasons for not taking university study.

Table 25

Reasons Given by Students for Not Taking University Courses

Reasons given	Number of students N	Percentage of students %*
Because of fees and extra expenses	116	70
Time factor	86	52
Not necessary to be a good teacher	69	42
Did not think could cope academically	48	29
Not interested	38	23
Because of timetabling difficulties	32	19
Do not enjoy study	28	17
Could not gain admission	5	3
Already a graduate	1	1
Other	33	20
TOTAL	456	

* Percentages are given as a proportion of all students ***NOT*** taking university courses - 166.

COMMENTS ON TABLE 25

- The majority of students, 116 out of 166, gave as one of their reasons the extra fees and expenses involved. Lack of finances seems increasingly to be seen by students as a barrier to taking university courses. When we asked students in our interview sample this question in their first year of college only 14 out of 52 students who were not taking university courses gave their financial situation as a reason for not taking university courses. The following year 30 out of 61 students gave lack of finances as one of their reasons. And in this final year questionnaire 70% of students not taking university courses say that this is because of the extra fees and expenses involved in doing so.
- The extra time involved also makes taking university courses difficult for many students, especially those with family commitments.
- There is also a hard core of students who believe that taking university courses does not make a better teacher.

Students ***Not*** *Taking University Study: Had they made the right decision?*

When these students were asked if they felt they had made the right decision and whether they do the same again, the pattern of answers was different from those students who had taken university courses. One hundred and thirteen of the 166 non-university students think they made the right decision, about the same proportion, 68%, as the university students. A quarter, however, feel that they did not make the right decision and the majority of these, 31 out of 43, would not make that same decision. They now feel that they should have taken university courses and if they were given the chance again they would do so.

Students' Attitude Towards University Study : Third-year interviews

When we interviewed our sample of students in their third year we also questioned them about university study. They were asked to comment, as they had in previous interviews, on doing university study as a teachers' college student.

Unlike the other two colleges, Auckland College of Education had, when our study began, no officially recognised or structured four-year course for students who were completing a university degree while gaining a teaching diploma. All students who started at the college in 1989, except those who have deferred their studies, graduated from the college at the end of 1991. However, six students from our interview sample, at the time of the interview, intended postponing their entry into classroom teaching and undertaking a full-time year of study at university in 1992. We considered these students to be similar to B.Ed. students in Christchurch and students taking conjoint degrees in Wellington in that they would all, after four years of study, obtain both a degree and a teaching diploma.

Almost every student had a different point to make, illustrating individual reactions to similar circumstances. Comments from students covered a wide range:

- one student was unsure of the value of having a degree when so many other teachers' college graduates will also have one.

- another student commented that the education courses at university had been very useful in giving more background knowledge.
- one student said how much she enjoyed university study and found it challenging.
- two students felt that the college did not give any real support to students doing university study, even though it professes to do so.
- one of these students, who started college the year before Auckland made everyone enrol for a B.Ed., felt disadvantaged compared with students who started at the college later.

Other students we interviewed had taken university courses but were not intending to complete a full year at university in 1992. These students completed a section in the questionnaire which asked them questions about their university study.

The comments from Christchurch students cover a range of issues. Some of the problems seen by students are the timetabling difficulties involved in taking courses at the two institutions, the burdensome workload and the lack of practical support from the college to encourage students to take on the extra work. On the positive side, students do enjoy the university work and find it useful to have some overlap so that they cover topics from different angles, which can often sharpen their understanding.

The six students in Wellington who are taking a four-year course have a range of comments to make about the experience. One student felt that any students considering taking the two courses together should not underestimate the amount of time and hard work involved. Another student felt that things would be a lot easier if the two institutions worked in more closely with each other although, in the opinion of another student, the college currently made all the concessions in making it easier for students to take university courses. Positive things to come out of university study were the development of time-management skills, for one student, and, for another, a general broadening of experience.

Of the seven students taking university study in Auckland, six felt that this study would contribute to their effectiveness as a classroom teacher. Two of the students commented that the experience had given them greater confidence in themselves and another saw the experience at university as broadening their outlook. Two other students were conscious that completing their degree gave them the option of teaching at the secondary school level.

All the students taking university courses in Christchurch felt that, to a greater or lesser extent, the courses will be useful to them in the classroom and contribute to their effectiveness as a primary school teacher. Some of the courses students mentioned as being potentially useful were psychology, Maori, special needs children and New Zealand history, although these by no means cover the total range of courses students would be taking at university.

Wellington students also thought their university study would contribute towards their effectiveness in the classroom. The only student who did not think her courses would be of use was a student taking a B.Sc., who felt that the content of her courses would be at too high a level for primary school children. All the other students decided that all their courses would be influential in improving their effectiveness as a teacher, if not directly then at least because the university courses had broadened their minds or made them more interesting people for the children to relate to.

When asked if they would have made the same decision about university study if they were starting again, all the students in Auckland said they would take university study. Some, however, would take on more than they did this time. Each student had slightly different reasons for doing this: one had felt the disadvantage of a more highly qualified teaching force coming behind her in the form of B.Ed. students and wished to compete for jobs on a more equal footing; another had not had the confidence to tackle university when he first came to college, and knowing now that he can cope wishes he had done more to start with; yet another student had missed enrolment in the first year. These students, however, are the ones committed to university study. Those who were unhappy with their decision to start university courses would probably have withdrawn by now.

As with Auckland, all the Wellington students would make the same decision if they had to choose again, except for one student who was not sure what she would do. Her difficulty was that there are a lot of college courses she would like to have done but which she has no time for because of university study. On the other hand, she is pleased that she will get the two qualifications which will give her more choices in her career.

Two students felt that, if they had their time over again, they would have started at university earlier in their college course. And two others emphasised the need for the intellectual stimulation provided by university courses and felt that they would have been bored taking college courses only.

Christchurch students seem the least happy of the three colleges with having studied jointly for a degree and a teaching diploma. Only two would make the same choice again. One of these would do so only because she feels the new structure of the B.Ed. would make it easier to study for the two qualifications at once than it has been for her. Two other students would complete a degree first and then do the post-graduate course of training. And one student was very unsure about what he would do if he had to make the decision again.

STUDENT FINANCES

Students who filled in a questionnaire were asked to indicate the ways by which they had been able to manage their finances during their third year at college. Table 26 summarises their responses.

Table 26
Student Finances

Source of financial support	% of students (N=289)
Working part-time while at college	62
Working in holidays	60
Support from parents	39
Own savings	39
Bank loan	34
Borrowed money family/friends	21
Spouse/partner's income	13
Domestic Purposes Benefit	8

COMMENTS ON TABLE 26

- * Over 60% of students had part-time jobs at the time they completed the questionnaire and a few more had had jobs during the year but were not employed at that particular time. Students took on a wide variety of jobs, the most frequently mentioned being in retail sales or servicing. These types of jobs offer more part-time opportunities and greater flexibility of hours than most.
- * The average number of hours per week worked by students was 15.
- * About the same proportion of students, 60%, had worked during the holidays to earn money to help them through their course.

  Students over 30 years of age were much less likely to have a paid job in the holidays or during term time ($\chi^2 = 57.695$ and $\chi^2 = 42.795$ respectively).

- Thirty-nine percent of students had some support from their parents. These tended to be students under 20. Students over 30 were not very likely to have monetary support from parents ($\chi^2 = 25.5201$). Thirty-nine percent of students used their own savings. Perhaps surprisingly these students tended to be under 20 years olds.
- Over one-third had taken out a bank loan.
- Twenty-one percent had borrowed money from family or friends.
- There were 22 students, 8%, for whom the Domestic Purposes Benefit (DPB) was an important source of income. These were mostly solo parents with children. The DPB has allowed them to gain a qualification which will help them to become financially independent.

Students were also questioned about their level of indebtedness. Seventy-three percent said they had debts. Of these, half owed less than $1,500, but a quarter owed $5,000 or more.

STUDENT PROFILE 5

Molly thinks the third-year course is an improvement on previous years. For one thing, there is much more choice, and, as students are doing what they have selected to do, it is less stressful. She thinks the college is better organised in the third year and there is more co-operation between staff and students - maybe just because students are now third years. She doesn't like the fact that staff-only days are right in the middle of timetable blocks when students are busy.

Molly is pleased with most of her third-year courses: co-operative learning, evaluation in the classroom, English as a second language, making science work, plants and animals, junior and middle school social studies, interpersonal skills, educational media and junior school reading. She finds that the courses are generally well planned. The students know from the beginning what they are going to cover and what is expected of them. Lecturers usually try to find out what students have already covered. The courses on educational media and evaluation in the classroom were both compulsory but the others were optional. The courses are mostly pretty practical, for example, the junior reading course, which Molly found backed up a lot of things she had done on section, helped her with keeping running records, and the science course on plants and animals gave guidance as to how to keep plants and animals in the classroom. She does wonder now whether she should have taken the science course, making science work, because halfway through she found that she had already covered most of the topics. The blurb made it look as though it would be something different from what was covered in the first two years, but it really wasn't. The only course Molly has not taken which she wishes she had done is one on special needs. She thinks the optional course she has done on evaluation and assessment should have been compulsory. The three most useful courses for Molly have been one on library skills, evaluation and assessment and junior physical education.

Molly is not particularly happy with the professional studies tutorials. They don't seem to be much of an improvement on previous years. As she says, 'We do a lot of nothing at times' - a lot of administrative work for the registry. They are going to get a first-year teacher in to talk to the group, which should be helpful. Molly acknowledges that tutors are helpful if students have a problem they need to talk about - even worries which have nothing to do with college. This is particularly important because of competition between students who were very supportive of each other in the first and second years but are now aware that they are going to be competing for jobs. For example, students compete with each other to get sections at schools where they hope they might later be able to apply for a teaching position.

Molly thinks that the course overall has increased her confidence and made her more assertive, but she doesn't otherwise feel she has changed as a person. She thinks that most of the skills she has she had before in the workforce, although she does have a heightened awareness of educational issues. She's certainly learned curriculum content which she was not aware of before. On the other hand, she doesn't think she's learnt much about child development at college. She has done that through a university course. Short-term planning she regards as a 'bit of a breeze' by the third year, but she hasn't made much progress on long-term planning. This is a topic which was meant to be covered in professional studies tutorials, but hasn't been done yet. As for the last six months of the college course, Molly really wants to find out more about how you just get a class 'up and running'. She'd also like to know what to expect of her tutor teacher in the school when she finds a job. She expects that these things will be covered before the end of the year. She is most looking forward to teaching reading, mathematics and physical education. She is not particularly looking forward to teaching Maori, music and drama. Maori and drama are two curriculum areas Molly has never seen taught in schools.

The length of training was about right for Molly although she also thinks a lot of time was wasted in useless courses.

Molly thinks that it is common for primary school classrooms to run integrated programmes. She has frequently observed such programmes and had plenty of opportunities to teach in them. Because of the amount of experience she has had she is very confident about running an integrated programme herself. Four areas where Molly is not so confident are in establishing a good 'tone' in a classroom, providing individualised programmes for children, report writing and conducting parent interviews.

When we talked to Molly about parents and the school, she wondered if they are as important as they used to be. She thinks that parents who are on boards of trustees certainly are, but is not sure about the others. She's already made quite a bit of use of parents while on section. She's written notes home asking for help with teaching particular skills and also for information and photos about places they have travelled to. She thinks it's important for teachers to keep parents informed about what's going on in the classroom and for parents to come along and find out for themselves. She doesn't think teachers should be available for parents '24 hours of the day', but they should certainly be prepared to arrange a time for parents to see them if they wish to. Molly observed two or three parent interviews on her last section and doesn't think she will have any problems discussing children with parents. She thinks teachers have to be diplomatic when talking to parents about their children; there could be problems if parents appear not to be interested.

Molly hasn't seen all the teaching methods advocated in college practised in schools. Teachers get a bit set in their ways. Planning as fully as the college would like does take a lot of time and it doesn't surprise Molly that teachers don't always plan in the detail that might be expected in an ideal situation. She has found herself that she's sometimes spent two or three hours planning for just one lesson.

Molly hasn't seen much science or social studies taught. In her experience a lot of the units done in classrooms are language and reading based.

Molly feels most of the third-year lecturers are pretty much up with modern teaching methods, partly because several of them are part-time and are also teaching in the schools.

Molly's views on the various equity issues we raised with students haven't changed much since she has been at college although she has a heightened awareness of various issues, for example, the comparative experience of boys and girls in classrooms. Molly thinks that the changes in school zoning procedures is an example of 'rich versus poor'. She thinks parents will want to send their children to the wealthier schools because they are better equipped. For herself, she much prefers schools in lower socio-economic areas because she thinks the people are nicer.

Molly thinks the assessments she has received for her college work have probably helped her to manage her time better and to know that she has to spend more time on her work to get it up to standard, but with just pass/fail courses, students tend to cruise along, do the work and know that they've passed. It 'bugs' Molly that there are people who hand work in two or three days late and still get the same mark as everybody else who has slaved to get work in on time and really put a lot of effort in. She thinks the assessments she has received on section have helped her to focus on the skills she needs to pracise next time she is in the classroom. Associate teachers all tend to tick the middle column on reports but the real value is in their comments and personal feedback. Molly is quite confident about assessing children's progress as long as there is a clearly stated school policy on what is expected. She is more confident in the junior area than she would be with older children.

Molly hasn't had a paid job while she has been a student but she has had the support of parents. This, along with her own savings and a bank loan have got her through college, although she does have debts of about $1,500.

Molly was disappointed in her final college report which she did not think reflected her performance as a student. She did not think it contained anything like enough detail after three years of work and doubts whether it will be helpful in getting her a job. Now that the course is completed Molly feels very confident about having a class of her own to teach, particularly junior or middle school, the age group she would prefer to teach. She would be less confident with an intermediate class. She feels the college course has prepared her adequately for the classroom but that there will still be a lot to learn on the job. She is more motivated to be a primary teacher than when she began the course because she now feels she has more knowledge and wants the opportunity to get out and use it. Apart from breaks for personal reasons, she expects to make a lifelong career in education. It may be that in five years' time she will be working for Social Welfare. She would also quite like to be principal of a small rural school. To come back to teachers' college as a lecturer is another possibility. Her main aim for future professional development at the moment is to complete AST courses and work towards a higher diploma. She also hopes to complete her degree but when will depend on where she finds a teaching position.

STUDENT PROFILE 6

Josie thinks the college has delivered the training that she expected to get. If it hasn't done so as well as she expected, that may be partly because the college is having to adapt to changes within the wider education community and has still to work out how to be most effective under a new system. When she began the course Josie expected that the college would give her all the training she needed and that when she graduated from the college she would be 'a total teacher'. She now realises that that could never have been the case. The older she gets, the more she realises she has to learn. One of the best qualities of the college is that it promotes teaching as a human profession. The college is a very personal place. The college's greatest weakness is in terms of organisation - timetabling, and making management decisions. A lot of time is spent on consultation but the decisions do not necessarily reflect that consultation.

The courses Josie is taking in her third year are mostly pretty good. She is particularly impressed with Professional studies 300. Part of the course was designed by the lecturer to cater for topics students particularly wanted covered. In some ways it would have been good if the course had been earlier in the programme. The quality of the lecturer made middle school maths the best maths course Josie had done; it was excellent. Physical education 300 is also an excellect course which could have been longer, because it related so directly to the classroom and included lots of information about different types of sport. The health first-aid course, held in an afternoon double spell, was a bit tedious because of all the talking. The music course Josie took was well delivered and practical but it overlapped a bit with a previous selected studies course which was disappointng. The Maori course was disappointing because it was so badly run. The course had no clear objectives or course outline and lacked direction. Josie feels it's difficult, as a Pakeha, to be critical, but she has the feeling that the lecturers thought that they were being 'flexible' whereas Josie thought more planning was needed. The courses within that department do not appear to be well co-ordinated.

Josie also took a course on mainstreaming which was excellent. The emphasis on the development of individual programmes for children was of more general use than just for mainstreamed children. The course wasn't long enough and, once again, it would have been helpful to have had a similar course in the first or second year. An audio-visual course was practical but tedious because it overlapped with material already covered in an earlier course. A health course on working with parents was well planned, focused and practical. It was much broader than health, covering topics such as parents in the classroom, face-to-face interviews and principals talking to parents about school policies.

Josie thinks that perhaps students had too much choice earlier in their training before they really knew what they needed to study. If there had been more compulsory courses in the first two years, students could then have selected courses covering topics they wanted to concentrate on in their third year. She thinks the first and second year should be mainly constraints and vocational courses and the third year selected studies. Josie hasn't, for example, done as much science as she thinks she needs because of the course choices she made. Three courses Josie regrets not having taken are drama in the classroom, dance in the classroom and more science courses. Two of her optional courses which she thinks should be compulsory are gender equity in the classroom and issues in mainstreaming.

In terms of her professional development, Josie said she came into college with a real love of children and was sure she would be able to make a difference to their experiences, but she is now more realistic. It's not the most important thing to be liked. You can't be friends to all the children. The crucial thing is that children learn, and they learn by enjoying what they are doing. They can only do that if the teacher plans well and has identified the children's needs. Josie now realises that many variables influence children's experiences, including the size of class and funding. She's definitely been helped with planning and how to monitor children's progress but she would have liked more help with keeping records. The main influences on Josie's teaching style have been role modelling lecturers and associate teachers, her own school teachers when she was a pupil and members of her family.

Josie thinks the college lacks focus and co-ordination. Recently there have been discussions on what makes a good beginning teacher. If the college could sort that out, it would help them to concentrate on important issues instead of, for example, trying to appease the art department or please the Maori studies department. Each department is worried about retaining their unit count instead of asking themselves the question, 'Are we producing good beginning teachers?'

Josie feels that the experiences students have on teaching practice depend very much on the quality of individual associates. None of Josie's have been the totally rounded individuals that the college advocates. Some have strengths in one area and not in others; Josie has not seen any associate who could implement all areas of the curriculum effectively and be a caring, sensitive, culturally aware person. She hasn't seen science, music, health or Maori studies taught to the extent they are advocated at college, or the use of audio-visual aids.

Josie regards parents as an important resource for the classroom. She can't hope to teach everything children need to learn and that's where parents come in. She thinks they have a right to come into the classroom whenever they want to. It's their children who are being educated and parents should know what's going on. She thinks the teacher needs to be very well organised so that if parents question what is going on they can support what they are doing with evidence. At the same time Josie regards the teacher as the professional and teachers have to protect the interests of all the children in the class. Parents need a basic understanding of ethics and to know that they can't discuss within the community what is going on in the classroom as far as individual children are concerned. For all her broad-minded views about parents' right to come into the classroom whenever they like, Josie confesses to being apprehensive about parents. She says she certainly used to see them as 'a scary sort of thing waiting in the corners in the dark to pounce!'

When we discussed equity issues with Josie she said she thought that there was heaps to do as far as sexism and racism in the schools are concerned. She 'cringes at the amount of sexism in schools'; both the way children relate to each other and the way teachers relate to children are huge problems. She doesn't think there has been enough emphasis in the college on helping students to understand the different social and economic backgrounds of pupils. She thinks this is particularly important because of the effects of current government education policies, which she believes will lead to greater discrepancies between schools. The complexities of these issues is one reason why Josie doesn't think school leavers should be accepted for training. Students straight from school are not mature enough to understand the issues, nor do they understand the power they will have as teachers. If students are good at 17 or 18, they'll be even better at 25.

When Josie came into the college she had no knowledge of the Maori language. She is disappointed that she has not had more opportunity to learn the language. She thinks one of the weaknesses of the college is its apparent inability to cater adequately for the needs of those students who are more advanced than basic Maori.

Josie was pleased with her college profile, which she thinks will help her to get a job. The profile was very positive. She's still unsure whether the college thought she had any weaknesses!

Josie thinks the course was about the right length but more could have been done in the time. The workload in year two and three was about right but there was not enough to do in year one.

Josie would most like to work with five- to seven-year-olds, particularly children from working-class backgrounds and children for whom English is a second language. Josie thinks children learn best when they are happy, feel comfortable about being part of the class and the work is exciting. She believes that a good education system is the basis for a good society and that education should be freely available to all people from the cradle to the grave. Primary teaching is Josie's first choice of a career, although she regards primary teaching as a 'stepping stone' to work in other areas of education. She is more motivated to be a teacher than when she began the course because she is so excited by the chance to try out all the things she has learnt. During the next few years Josie intends to enrol in an intensive Te Reo Maori course, and a Samoan language course. She also intends to do some further reading on co-operative learning. She would like to take AST courses in management and perhaps computers, and to train in achievement-based assessment. She may complete her degree some time in the future but right now she hates the thought of university - maybe that is partly because of the courses she chose. Josie is about $8,000 in debt. She used to be in paid employment until the shop closed down about two months ago.

As for changes to the course of training, Josie thinks on-going staff development should be essential since some staff do not model good teaching techniques. There should be constant evaluation of individual courses and the programme as a whole to ensure that it is up to date and producing top quality beginning teachers. There needs to be a real commitment on the part of the college to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. For all its imperfections, however, the college programme is an exciting and fulfilling one. The emphasis and philosophy are still focused on people and the joys of learning. The real strength of the college lies in the warmth of its staff and the integrity of most of the management.

COLLEGE WORKLOAD AND LENGTH OF COLLEGE COURSE

College Workload

We questioned students about the workload that had been expected of them as students each year they had been at college, and about the length of their training. Table 27 summarises students' responses to the question about the college workload. It will be seen that there were variations by college and that within colleges students differed from each other in their reaction to each year's college workload.

Table 27
The College Workload

Year	Too much % of students			About right % of students			Not enough % of students		
	Auck	Wgtn	Chch	Auck	Wgtn	Chch	Auck	Wgtn	Chch
Year one	15	4	3	75	50	54	10	43	41
Year two	37	12	8	54	61	76	9	27	16
Year three	33	25	16	47	64	73	20	7	5

Note: For Auckland N=194, Wellington N=58 and Christchurch N=37.

COMMENTS ON TABLE 27

Auckland

* Students were most likely to be satisfied with the workload in year one, 75% of students saying it was 'about right'. This percentage decreased to 54% in year two and 47% in year three.

* In each year the percentage of students who thought the workload was 'too much' was greater than the percentage who thought the workload was 'not enough'. In both cases these percentages were considerably lower than those who thought it 'about right'.

- The percentage of students who thought the workload was 'too much' and the percentage who thought it was 'not enough' both doubled between year one and year three. In year three 33% of students thought the workload was 'too much' and 20% thought it was 'not enough'.

Wellington

- Students were most likely to think the workload was 'about right' in year three, 64% of students thinking this to be the case. This figure compares with only 50% who thought this was so in the first year.
- Those students in year one and two who did not think the workload was 'about right' were likely to think the workload was 'not enough' - 43% in year one and 27% in year two. This percentage dropped to 7% in year three.
- Few students in year one or two thought that the workload was 'too much' - 4% in year one and 12% in year two. This percentage increased to 25% in year three.

Christchurch

- Students were most likely to think the workload was 'about right' in years two and three (76% and 73%) compared with year one (54%).
- The percentage of students who thought the workload was 'not enough' dropped dramatically between year one and year three - 41% compared with 5%.
- At the same time the percentage of students who thought the workload was 'too much' increased from 3% in year one to 16% in year three.

Because the colleges organise their programmes differently, and the experience of students within colleges differs depending on the courses they take, it is inappropriate to make much of the differences across colleges. The figures given in Table 27 do, however, support the impression we gained through interviewing students that those in Auckland were most satisfied with the content and pace of their first-year course. Students in Christchurch and Wellington were more inclined to think the pace was too slow in the first year. For these students, there was a dramatic improvement in the third year. The fact that a significantly higher percentage of Auckland students thought the workload in the third year was 'not enough' ($\chi^2 = 8.818$) needs to be seen against the backdrop of the greater demands expected of them in their first year and their greater satisfaction with that year. The percentage also needs to be seen against that of students in their own college who thought the workload in their third year was too high.

We looked at two other factors to try and explain these different attitudes to the workload. Firstly, we thought it possible that students who were undertaking university courses at the same time as the college course may have found the workload too great. However, this did not seem to be the case. We also looked at whether parents with demands on their time from families, had found the workload too great, but again, this does not seem to be a factor which would explain the differences.

Length of College Course

The students' attitude towards the total length of the college course is summarised in Table 28.

Table 28

Student Attitudes Towards the Length of the College Course

Length of course	Auckland %	Wellington %	Christchurch %
Too short	2	2	0
About right	36	43	62
Too long	61	52	38

Note: Auckland N=194, Wellington N=58, Christchurch N=37.

It is clear from Table 28 that virtually no students consider the college course to be too short.

- * Christchurch students were the most likely to think the length of the college course was 'about right' (62% compared with 43% in Wellington and 36% in Auckland, $\chi^2 = 8.630$).
- * Christchurch students were the least likely to think the length of the college course was 'too long' (38% compared with 52% in Wellington and 61% in Auckland, $\chi^2 = 6.964$).

We can only speculate about the reasons for these differences between colleges. They may reflect student attitudes towards their third year of training; in Auckland fewer than half the students (47%) felt the workload was 'about right' compared with 64% in Wellington and 73% in Christchurch. (On the other hand, although 20% of Auckland students thought the workload in the third year was 'not enough', 33% of them thought it was 'too much'.) Another possible explanation which we investigated was the different nature of the student cohorts. A larger percentage of Christchurch students, compared with Auckland and Wellington, were school leavers; because of this we thought it possible that mature students may be most frustrated by the length of the course. However any differences between age groups were not significantly different.

Students Who Thought the Course Was Too Long

Students were given the opportunity to comment about the length of their training. About 100 of those who thought the course was too long added a comment; most were from

Auckland.

Auckland

The Auckland students' comments tended to fall into two related categories:

- Too much time is wasted. The course is drawn out and repetitious.
- The course could be completed in two years, particularly for mature students.

It is important to note that in Auckland all students now entering the college are required to undertake university study. This was not the case when we began our research project.

Typical comments were:

> Could be cut down to a two year full-time course as in 8.30 a.m. until 5 p.m.
>
> It really is a two-year course spread over three years.
>
> Without having four-hour breaks between lectures we could complete the training in two years.
>
> Would still want to do all the courses I have done but more squashed together - less gaps.
>
> Too much wasted time and spare periods. I was ready to teach at the beginning of this year.
>
> So much wasted time - if condensed I still feel I would be a confident teacher.
>
> My first year was good because I needed to adjust to college life but because I am a mature student with many skills that younger people need to develop, I don't think I needed to be here for three years.
>
> Three years is too long, especially for someone my age (mid-20s). I think it should be shortened to two years for mature students - perhaps at college's discretion.
>
> Could be condensed into two years giving us 30 hours per week instead of 13 hours per week.
>
> This course could be shortened by not wasting so much time in lectures that are either drawn out, repetitive or irrelevant.
>
> There is a great deal of time wasted - classes cancelled without warning, late starts to classes, meaningless and time-consuming tasks, no value given to or acknowledgement of previous life experiences, classes cut short, etc.
>
> It was okay for me as I have completed my degree in the three years I have been here.

Wellington and Christchurch

Wellington and Christchurch students who were critical of the length of the course, although less vocal and emphatic than those from Auckland, also said they believed the course could be done in two years. This was particularly the case for students not taking university classes.

Typical comments were:

> Year one is too impractical. If the course is three years, do not make year one a waste of time. (Wellington)
>
> The most useful courses could be put together for a shortened (two-year) course. I found the third-year courses very useful and second- and first-year courses significantly less useful. (Wellington)
>
> This should be a two-year course. Too many/much spare time and classes drawn out to make them go the distance which makes them boring. This would develop a challenge amongst students and lecturers. (Wellington)
>
> Not enough work for me. I have had two days off a week and have had two four-week blocks off and I am still over the maximum I am allowed to do. I am not allowed to do any more! (Wellington)
>
> As a mature student, I felt that a lot of year one and year two could have been left out - the rest combined into one year at work! (Christchurch)
>
> Year one and two could be combined. (Christchurch)
>
> Three years could be compressed into a shorter time if we didn't muck around so much in your first year. However, there still needs to be adequate amounts of time out in schools for sections. You learn twice as much in the schools on section as you would learn in the same period of time at college. (Christchurch)

Students Who Thought the Length of Course to be About Right

About half of these students added a comment. Although they believed three years was necessary if the course continued to be organised the way it was, many of these students echoed comments made by those who thought the course was too long - too much time was wasted. A number of these students also said that if the course was better organised it could be done in two years. The main argument for believing three years was necessary was to ensure that students had enough practical experience in schools. Others also commented that three years were necessary for their personal growth and to develop their own philosophy of teaching.

Typical comments were:

You need three years to gain experience and strategies. If the course was shortened you would not have tried out a variety of techniques on section that are needed. If you could do six teaching sections in two years then a shortened course would be brilliant. (Wellington)

At the end of my second year, my associates and I thought that I was ready for teaching, and that three years was too much for me. But in this last year I have changed so much and matured also. I thought I knew everything then, but now I realise that I'm at the beginning, and that is exciting! (A little scary too.) (Wellington)

It is not the length of time but the content of the courses which should be looked at. (Christchurch)

I was tempted to tick "too long", but I wouldn't want to miss out on the third-year elective courses I took. Terrific value. (Christchurch)

There is a lot of wasted time. I would have benefited from having extra music and reading tuition, however, there was a limit of four options in our third year. Most of the popular courses were overfull and there was not a second stream available to cater for people who really wanted to learn more. Frustrating! (Auckland)

I am quite happy with the length of the course but feel that the content has been very lax on occasion. Lectures can be very uninspiring and many courses have not come up to expectation. (Auckland)

The three years gives a good chance to breathe an "educational" environment in preparation for teaching, *but* more could be packed into the course overall. (Auckland)

I was asked if I wanted to shorten my course (due to previous experience) however, I felt the three years were necessary and I am glad I chose this option. (Wellington)

Two and a half years would be better but I was prepared to take on more learning for me. (Wellington)

But there were a few courses that were useless and a waste of time. If these were cut out the course could be shorter. These were mainly first-year classes and had no relevance. (Wellington)

To grow professionally/maturity it is right, but we have lots of spare time because of lack of organisation in some courses. (Auckland)

I feel it is a luxury to be a student. I have had opportunities to meet people, try new things, experience new ideas. (Wellington)

I didn't start forming my own philosophy about teaching until my third year and things really came together in this year. (Wellington)

> It gives you enough time to find yourself and do things/courses you haven't done either in year one or two. (Wellington)

Are Students More or Less Motivated to Teach Than When They Began the Course?

We asked the students whether they were more or less motivated to be primary school teachers than when they began the course.

Sixty percent of students overall said that they were either more motivated to be primary teachers than when they began the course, or about the same. This percentage differs considerably from the response we got from second-year students when we interviewed them and asked them the same question. On that occasion the overall response was 80%. There was some variation by college as seen in Table 29. For example, half of the Wellington students said they were *less* motivated to teach than when they began the course compared with 42% in Auckland and 41% in Christchurch.

Table 29

Students' Motivation to Teach at End of Course Compared With on Entry to College

	Auckland		Wellington		Christchurch	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	(N = 194)		(N = 58)		(N = 37)	
More motivated	62	32	14	25	12	32
About the same	61	31	17	30	10	27
Less	81	42	28	50	15	31
Total	204	105	59	105	37	100

NOTE: The percentages total more than 100 because in a few cases students ticked more than one option.

Students who were either *more* or *less* motivated were given the opportunity to add a comment, and most did.

Those students who are *more* motivated:

* Many of these students are confident in their ability to be effective teachers. They came into college wanting to teach and now believe they have the skills to do so. They are impatient to get out and have the responsibility of their own class.

* Many factors have contributed towards this increased confidence, but the main one has been the teaching experience they have had in schools while they have been in college.

* Successful teaching experience has increased their enthusiasm for teaching. They have

been encouraged by how well they feel they have related to the children they have worked with and the pleasure they have derived from seeing their progress.

- They see teaching as a challenging and rewarding job. Some have a 'missionary fervour' to use their skills to improve a system which they believe is at present failing children. They 'owe it to the next generation'.
- Others commented on their own personal growth and development. Their increased maturity will enable them to be more professional teachers.

Those students who are *less* motivated:

- The most important reason is students' disillusionment because of poor job prospects.
- The students' concern that they may not get a job after completing three years' training is coupled with increasing awareness that teaching is a stressful job. These factors, and the workload, including out-of-hours work, make them wonder whether teaching is the job for them. Such students are also likely to consider the pay inadequate.
- A smaller number of students, particularly from Auckland, expressed dissatisfaction with aspects of the college course, including the length and the slow pace in the third year. This contributed to their decreased motivation to teach.
- A few students were concerned about their competence in the classroom.
- A few were also concerned with broader educational issues and wondered if they now wanted to work in a system where you had to 'constantly fight for children's needs', and one that accepted unregistered teachers.

Students' Overall Reaction to Their Preparation for the Classroom

As a summary question, we asked the total cohort of students: *Has the college course prepared you adequately for the classroom?* Fifty-eight percent of the students answered 'yes', 25% said they were 'not sure' and 17% said it had not. There were differences by college as shown in Table 30.

Table 30

Extent to Which College Course Has Prepared Students for the Classroom

Student prepared	Auckland % (N=194)	Wellington % (N=58)	Christchurch % (N=37)
Yes	50	73	78
Not sure	28	20	19
No	22	7	3

It will be seen from Table 30 that students from Christchurch and Wellington were considerably more likely than those from Auckland to think the college course had prepared them adequately - (Christchurch 78%, Wellington 73% and Auckland 50% $\chi^2 = 17.084$). Students had the opportunity to add a comment and about half did so. Regardless of whether students had answered 'yes', 'no' or 'not sure' in response to the original question, there were recurring themes in their comments:

- there is only so much the college can do
- the course should have more practical work included
- a lot will depend on the school and class the student is placed in.

Students who answered 'yes'.

* The college provides a good professional training, but:
  - there is still much to learn when in the classroom
  - some courses are more relevant than others
  - the programme could still be improved.

* Specific courses were particularly relevant, for example, PS 300 and PS 342 (Wellington); third-year courses compared with year one and two (Christchurch).

* Students learn more on teaching practice than in college.

* It is hard to say until you are actually in the classroom.

Examples of students' comments were:

> It has prepared me enough to feel confident to be a year-one teacher next year. I believe a lot of important classroom learning will take place when I'm actually in the classroom. (Wellington)
>
> I'm not totally prepared but I don't think I can be until I teach full-time. (Auckland)
>
> Third year most relevant and attuned to teaching. Previous two years very tedious. (Christchurch)
>
> When I came to college I knew I was capable of being a teacher. Now I have gained theories and strategies that will make teaching a successful career for myself. (Wellington)
>
> I think you can only be so prepared - some things you can only learn when you're doing them. Although there was room for improvement, I think my training was more than adequate - but just a beginning. (Wellington)
>
> The theoretical side started to fall into place when on major responsibility. (Wellington)

> Planning programmes has not been adequately covered. However, year three has been good - very practical. (Auckland)
>
> Excellent courses and top quality lecturers who are in touch with the needs of children in the classroom. (Christchurch)
>
> In general terms, even though some aspects were only briefly covered in lectures, for example, record-keeping. (Auckland)
>
> I'm certainly more confident to teach than without my college course - just as well, really! (Auckland)

Students who answered 'not sure'.

- No one can be sure until they are faced with their own class.
- Student hesitant about own ability.
- In some areas 'yes', in others 'no'.
- Some gaps, for example, record-keeping, more time on core curriculum.
- Need for more practical and less theory.

Examples of students' comments:

> It's hard to know what challenges you will face in any classroom. I suppose I have been prepared to expect the unexpected. (Wellington)
>
> I believe that college has done as much as possible in the three years. However, it is not really adequate because not until you have your own class is it that you are really prepared. (Auckland)
>
> Until you are actually out teaching, I don't think you will ever realise what it is like or be prepared. Resources wise, yes, but experience wise, no. (Auckland)
>
> More time could have been spent on core curriculum and classroom procedures. (Wellington)
>
> I feel confident, but only time will tell. (Wellington)
>
> Even though I have done well academically, I myself feel unsure about my own ability and stress. (Auckland)

Students who answered 'no'.

Only about half of the students who answered 'no' added a comment. Proportionately more students who answered 'no' were from Auckland, and all but two of the comments were from Auckland students. The comments repeated concerns raised by students when they had commented on the length of the course.

- Some courses are irrelevant
- Much time is wasted
- Gaps in course content
- Insufficient practical experience.

Examples of students' comments:

> It becomes obvious by the third year what you need to know and we end up doing courses that are not relevant. (Auckland)
>
> College could have been more intensive and more courses compulsory which were relevant to the job. (Wellington)
>
> Lacked content in 1. management in the classroom 2. keeping records, 3. providing for the needs of children with ESL. (Auckland)
>
> Evaluation, assessment, record-keeping, reports, interviews - the whole side of book work - we should have a course in it. (Auckland)
>
> Some of the lecturers are past it. They have been away from the classroom for too long and don't know what is happening any more. (Auckland)
>
> I feel it is the sections in which we really learn to run a classroom. (Auckland)
>
> I have prepared myself, not college. (Auckland)

Students' Overall Confidence to Teach

We asked the students, *Now that you have almost completed your course - how do you feel about having your own class to teach?* Most students, 57%, were 'confident', and 40% were 'very confident'. Only 3% said they were 'not very confident.'

Changes to Course of Training

We asked the students through the questionnaire if they could suggest any changes that could be made to the course of training. The students could make up to three suggestions.

Teaching Experience

The main suggestion, made by about a third of the students overall, was that more practical teaching experience in schools should be included in the course. Most of these students simply asked for 'more practical or teaching experience'. Others were more specific in their suggestions. The following is a list of their ideas. A few of these suggestions were made by about five students. More commonly they are the stated views of one or two students.

* More time in schools in the third year.
* A few students suggest the third year should be an apprenticeship year, most of the time being spent in one classroom. Others suggest one month in college and one month out in schools.
* Students should be attached to one class over longer periods of time, for example, for all teaching practice such as in one year, in order to watch pupil progress.
* Longer teaching sections than the usual four weeks.
* A year-long attachment to a particular class with a major responsibility to it.
* The opportunity to visit a range of schools and classes towards the end of training to observe different teaching styles and collect further ideas.
* More visits to schools to see specific areas of the curriculum taught, for example, swimming, Te Reo Maori.
* More rigorous screening of associates - reports submitted by trainees should be taken into account. It should be easier for students to change associates if they prove to be unsatisfactory.
* Students need more bicultural experiences in schools.
* Consideration should be given to payment for students when in full control.
* Students should have sections in schools where children come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds.
* More practical experience in schools of student's choice anywhere in New Zealand. Teaching experience overseas, particularly the Pacific, should also to be considered.

Structure and Length of Training Programme

Second, students were most likely to comment on the need for changes to the structure and length of the training programme. This was particularly the case with Auckland students. The main suggestions were that:

* The college course should be more intensive with less wasted time resulting from:
    - too many gaps between lectures
    - overlap between courses and lack of co-ordination between departments and among lecturers
    - repetition
    - poor management of student time by staff.

* A few of the students who said the course should be more intensive were happy with a three-year course, but more commonly students suggested that if the course was more intensive the ground could be covered in two years. This was particularly the case with mature students.
* More credit should be given for prior learning and experiences relevant to teaching.

College Courses

Third, students made general comments about college courses within the college programme as well as individual references to particular courses. The most common view was that courses should all be practical and relevant to the needs of children.

By college, the following suggestions were made by students. Unless indicated, the suggestions were frequently made by only one student, or perhaps two or three.

Auckland

- Course to cope with unemployment to help those who are not going to get teaching positions.
- EST courses to be outlined in more detail to enable students to make best choice.
- Add EST courses to compulsory programme.
- Students should have more opportunities to take advanced courses.
- More courses focusing on ESL children in the classroom.
- There should be more emphasis on the syllabus in all courses.
- Courses not considered relevant by some students, or in need of improvement:
  - second-year education
  - second-year mathematics
  - social studies course ('known on the campus as the most boring course imaginable').
- Courses with more emphasis on school administration.
- There should be a better range of options.
- Course on keeping school records included in first year rather than wait until end of third year.
- More courses should be run like extension studies.
- More courses on planning and evaluating a classroom programme.
- Courses which should be compulsory and/or for longer:
  - maths and reading compulsory for at least two years
  - courses in self-esteem, communication, anger management
  - curriculum areas which should be extended to 100 hours: music, art, health, physical education, science
  - computer course.
- Reading course should be taken in first rather than second year.
- Course on report writing and parent interviews.
- More work on long-term planning.
- More coaching courses for students needing help with basic skills, for example, spelling and punctuation.
- Course on time management and stress management to be run early in college course to prepare them to handle their time at college effectively.
- Unlimited access to option subjects/more options available - ESTs and IDS have been extremely beneficial.
- Some courses to come earlier in the three-year period, for example, issues to do with evaluation of children with special abilities.
- More information about unit plans.

- Incorporate language and reading programmes and make them a compulsory three-year course, including the education of second language learners.
- More concentrated curriculum courses - shorter block with more lectures.

Wellington

- There should be a compulsory communication and counselling course.
- Maths should be compulsory for at least two years (5).
- There should be more on the core curriculum subjects.
- Reading should be compulsory for two years.
- Dramatic, expressive arts to be a full-time major from year one to three.
- Multicultural studies should be taken by Pacific Island lecturers as well as Maori.
- There should be more formal, intellectual study of education. More emphasis on education issues and latest research and its implications for education.
- Courses which should be compulsory:
  - HE350 Working with parents
  - HE191 First aid
  - EN390 Myths and legends.
- More emphasis on ESL and reading difficulties.
- Management course.
- Fewer one-off lessons; less micro-teaching.
- Computer courses revamped:
  - look at desktop and not waste time with LOGO and pictals
  - computers out-of-date
  - computer classes too full.

Christchurch

- There should be more:
  - Maori courses and bicultural studies (7)
  - outdoor education courses in first and second years
  - English as a second language
  - art
  - music
  - computers
  - classroom management strategies
  - more choice.

Standards and Assessment
About 15% of students overall, rather more in Christchurch, had comments to make about the college methods of assessment and the standards expected of students. Student comments raised the following issues:

- the need for consistency across departments and between lecturers

- the need for the amount of effort students put into assignments to be reflected in the mark received
- the need for some nationally approved system of marking and assessing students, particularly since they are competing for jobs across regional boundaries
- an agreed standard of work; standards should be more stringent
- the spreading of assignments to allow for a reasonable workload throughout the year: not too many due at end of year, particularly in the third year when students are looking for jobs, and sitting university exams.

Lecturer Accountability

About 10% of students overall made comments about the lecturing staff. These, placed under the general heading of staff accountability, included comments about issues such as:

- the need for all staff to have relevant, recent school experience. For some students this would be achieved by more staff being appointed on contract
- the need for on-going staff development to ensure that all staff are up-to-date in their knowledge and model good teaching practice
- the need for staff reviews and appraisal, including student evaluation. Staff who do not measure up should be retired early
- the need for staff to set clear course objectives and stick to them. Some courses are not consistent with course outlines
- the need for some staff to plan their courses more thoroughly and run them efficiently and effectively. For some students this means more staff input and less reliance on student contributions
- a 'shake-up' of some departments
- lecturers to teach only subjects in which they are qualified
- staff to treat all students in the same manner without showing preference to some individuals or groups
- staff should know students better, particularly if they are going to write their final reports.

Internal College Administration and Organisation Including Timetable

About 5% of students overall (rather more from Wellington) had comments to make about changes to the college administration and organisation, including timetabling, which they think would improve the course of training.

Wellington

Those Wellington students who made a comment about college administration and organisation focused on the timetable, although there is no clear pattern in their comments. Issues raised were:

- the need for a timetable to be made and stuck to
- staff should co-operate to work out the timetable
- all students to be in college at the same time for longer than one week so that

in-college meetings can be held, particularly the student executive

- six-week blocks too rigid - do not allow for different year groups to meet
- a more flexible timetable would mean subjects did not conflict
- sections at a 'better' time.

Auckland
Students once again commented on the need for a more compact week with less time wasted between classes. Other points made by individual Auckland students were:

- greater involvement of students in planning course content
- better integration between departments
- better co-ordination between the college and the university in terms of work requirements and due dates for assignments
- an age limit for entry to college of at least 20 years
- students make up own timetable based on minimum and maximum course subject requirements
- do away with roll calls.

Christchurch
The few comments from Christchurch students were also about timetabling:

- the need for the timetable to be 'better planned'
- the students to know in advance when the holidays and staff-only days are
- courses are not properly planned because six-week courses are crammed into five weeks
- a timetable which allowed for more mixing between groups - first, second and third years; early childhood and secondary
- workload spread more evenly over three years
- make organisational decisions and stick to them
- students who do/do not like six-week blocks.

General
In a range of miscellaneous comments students in the three colleges suggested that:

- fees should be reduced
- students should be guaranteed a job at the end of the college course
- students should be treated as adults and teachers rather than students and children
- there should be a pub on site (Auckland).

Key Events

As a final interview question we asked the students if, when they thought right back to when they started college, any experiences, events or people particularly stood out in their minds during their training. We asked the question because, in the planning stages of our project, a member of our advisory committee, who had been a college lecturer, wondered if there were 'key events' in the lives of students which were particularly influential in their development as teachers.

Auckland
Six students answered 'no'. In their experience everything was much of a muchness and nothing stood out as being particularly memorable.

The remaining students all had comments to make. Apart from five who made negative comments, the remainder were positive. The negative comments referred to a particularly disappointing section experience with a teacher the student considered to be incompetent and quite unsuitable to be an associate, poor college organisation and distress over the events leading to criticisms of the college in a *Holmes* TV show.

The positive comments fell into three main categories:

- the excellence of individual lecturers
- the value of the Interdisciplinary Studies programme (IDS)
- the importance of good teaching practice sections.

The Excellence of Individual Lecturers
At least half of the students referred to individual lecturers (sometimes more than one) who had been particularly influential, usually because of their professional teaching skills, but also because of their sympathetic support of students:

> A couple of lecturers stand out - my art lecturer and my science lecturer, and my music lecturer too. I think because of their caring and time - you can just go and talk to them when you feel like it and they've been doing quite a bit too. I learned a lot from them in the way that they act and teach. But my tutor, he's definitely the one! He was my teacher in intermediate as well so I've had a lot of experience with him. He's just brilliant. He's put a lot into my life. He's probably the best teacher I've ever had. He's just neat really - his friendship and his counselling, just him being there, he's just so good. We're lucky to have the same bloke for three years, it's fantastic.

> -- in social studies in my first year. We had her for 100 hours. She really showed me how learning can be fun, you know it really can be fun. The whole environment she placed us in was just so stimulating and everyone really enjoyed themselves. It was great. I think the entire phys. ed. department. I've really got a lot out of them. ... is my tutor. She's helped me a lot in terms of my own personal development, getting things down on paper.

> Oh yes, loads of things. Someone or other in the education department gave a lecture to do with teaching Maori students - that was wonderful. -- in the first week of college did this drama thing which was an introduction and ended up with touching and things like that and working together. ... It was a very positive experience - that was really good. And -- in the art department. He's an artist himself and I think

> that's what makes some art teachers so wonderful. They understand art ... he's got such an understanding of art, he lives and breathes it. It's fantastic. And -- at the reading centre ... he's so thorough and always had research there for us to refer to so that things he was saying if we wanted to know more, it was always there on disk for us to look at and whatever he said was always backed up by research and quite readable research too. Everything he taught us was excellent and we could take every single lesson into the classroom.

The Interdisciplinary Studies Programme

Rather more than a quarter of the students referred to the value of the IDS programme because of breadth of experiences offered and the element of choice:

> The IDS programme was quite good... while a lot of them are directly related to education, a lot of them are related to your own self-confidence and just getting a different experience because the thing with teaching is that you rely on a lot of experiences that you've had and a lot of them are confidence-building experiences and yet they're quite different - they're mostly outdoors.

> IDS - you get a choice of something you do for two weeks. That has extended my mind for this year. The last one I did on communication and counselling - I tell you it was amazing. You just notice everything that you say that's not quite right. They're brilliant and they stand out in your mind for a long time. The other one I did was drama. I learned a lot from creative drama. I didn't like some parts of it, but I learned a lot about dealing with others which is really important and that sticks in my mind as well.

Teaching Practice Sections

Teaching practice sections have been mentioned many times in this report so there is little point in going over the same issues here, but their value was once again stressed by students when they talked about the 'key events' in their time at college, for example:

> I think every one of my sections stand out as being very valuable and I always remember back to one in my second year and what I did at that school. That stands out. I've got an ideas book and I write down what I suppose you could call key events - something that you find a highlight in a class.

In a range of other comments, made in each case by only two or three students, were:

- the importance of the support of other students
- personal experiences, for example, the fact that a student had married another student while at college
- extra-curricular activities, for example the Christian Fellowship Group and social events
- the value of sporting exchanges
- the importance of the college marae, particularly the powhiri held there, and the experience in a whanau class

- the opportunity to develop personal skills, for example, an individual student's musical ability.

Wellington

When we asked Wellington students to comment on any 'key events' during their time at college, only two referred to any negative experiences. One of these was to poor lecturers but, the student added, 'these were far outnumbered by the good ones'. The second student talked about the increase in student fees as being something that really stood out and had affected student attitudes towards their training.

Four students said that nothing stood out, but this was not because the total college experience was mediocre and undifferentiated but rather:

> Key events? Well; I don't know about that. There have been lots of "key events". That's what I enjoy about the college - it's so very vital and full of lots of exciting people.
>
> Nothing really stands out because lots of things are happening all the time.

The comments of the students who made positive remarks about 'key events' tended to fall into three main categories:

- the quality of individual lecturers and the supportive nature of the institution
- the importance of teaching experience
- the importance of student relationships and the support they gave each other.

Other comments, made in each case by two or three students, were the value of:

- individual courses, for example, first-year drama and Kapa Haka
- trips to the Cook Islands and the Abel Tasman National Park as part of the social studies and science programmes
- the initial Maori welcome
- the college major production
- taking part in student protest marches.

Examples of students' comments:

> Doing drama in the first year. It was one of the most amazing things that I could ever have done - for personal development and for really getting a look at children and out-of-school situations.
>
> It would have to be the friends you make - that would be the ultimate. The closeness, that you become so close to people and share ideas and soon be joining in their success. That's the key thing.
>
> A lot of them are choice students. I've learnt a lot off them. Not so much the

> lecturers, but just the students themselves. People come from different walks of life and because I've never worked, I've come straight from school, it's been really good to listen to them and learn a lot from them.
>
> I think the Maori studies lecturer I've had. If I hadn't had her I wouldn't have taken as many courses as I have done and grown. I would have just stopped and not gone any further. I would have felt insecure about going on if it had not been for her. It's funny but I chose the only pakeha in the Maori department.
>
> Probably the support of the other students in the college. I found they've been really warm and that there's always somebody to talk to and if you can't do an assignment there's always somebody that will sit down and show you how to do something. They support each other if you're not coping. It's quite different from varsity. You feel that you could tell them any need that you've got. ...If you end up in the South Island and were walking along a street - it would be just so good to see any of them - to hang on to them and think you could go anywhere with the people you meet here. There would be only a few that you wouldn't want to end up in a school with. Most people's attitudes are really warm to each other.
>
> Just the willingness of everyone here to help everyone else and that goes for lecturers and students.

Christchurch

As with students at Auckland and Wellington, Christchurch students referred to positive aspects of their experience at college which stood out as 'key events'. Three students said that nothing stood out and three had critical coments to make. Two of these were negative statements about individual lecturers and one referred to the initial welcoming ceremony - boring and cold.

On the positive side, students were equally likely to refer to:

- particular courses, although no two students referred to the same course
- the quality of the third-year tutors
- teaching experience.

In a range of other comments, all referred to by three or fewer students, were the importance of:

- various extra-curricular activities, for example, the college production of *Grease*, basketball at lunchtime and the orientation ball
- the student strike
- the support of friends
- Maori cultural week in the first year
- the changes that had gone on at the college during the three years
- the fact that in the third year there was some subject choice.

Examples of students' comments:

The sections stand out. They're just fantastic and if I didn't have sections, I wouldn't be here. But the sections are the only thing, to be quite honest, the sections are the only things that keep me going.

Playing basketball at lunchtimes. Some of the courses have been really good. Mostly the courses from either phys. ed. or this year, education. The education courses I have done have been really good. Nothing socially. We're not a very social bunch here.

Well, science really stands out this year. It's just so enjoyable, I really like it. I used to feel quite threatened in science when we had to sit there for two hours and listen. That's about it, apart from our tutor.

I suppose last year's social studies. I just loved the whole course because I really, really liked the lecturer. I would like to have him again next year but we're not meant to but I think I should be able to ask for him - user pays approach.

Grease was great - the musical production last year. It was a great experience partly because primary and secondary actually mixed.

I really liked the first year when we had the Maori cultural week. We were invited to a school and at the school we had a meal and sang songs and talked to the kids and made flax fish and all that sort of carry on. It was a really neat week. Nothing else really stands out.

My tutor last year in the professional studies group. He stood out because he was there to help and he had that role and unlike other tutors if we had a problem he would go and sort it out. Which is quite unusual because you usually got brushed aside. So he was somebody that stood out and we felt that we could go and talk to him about anything if we had any late assignments, if we had any problems with section or other problems with college.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Student Attitudes to Teaching as a Career

In both the 1989 and the 1991 surveys students were asked a question about their attitudes to teaching as a career. Table 31 compares the students' responses at the end of their course compared with their views on entry to college.

Table 31
Student Intentions with Regard to Teaching as a Career

Stated intention	1991 % (N=289)	1989 % (N=549)
Primary teaching first choice of career	53	54
Primary teaching a stepping stone	52	47
Expect to make a lifelong career of teaching	46	67
Being a student has been as important as my career as a teacher	28	13
Drifted into teaching	16	8
Preferred to have trained as secondary teacher	9	6
Prefer career outside of teaching	8	5

COMMENTS ON TABLE 31

- The major difference between the answers of the students in 1989 and 1991 is in the proportion who expect to make a lifelong career as a teacher. This has reduced by 21%.
- A few of these students now feel they would have preferred to train as secondary teachers or to have a career outside of teaching.
- In 1991, a slightly larger proportion of the students now see their primary training as a stepping stone to other opportunities.
- The percentage of students who now say they 'drifted into teaching' has doubled, but

the numbers are still relatively low.

* Students in 1991 are more likely than they were in 1989 to say that they value the experience of being a student (28% compared with 13%).

Students' Plans for Their Own Professional Development

Students were asked what plans they had for their professional development once they had left college, both in their first year out of college and in the longer term.

* The majority, 57%, say that initially, given the present employment situation, they will be happy just to get a teaching job.
* Students see working in the classroom as an opportunity to put into practice all they have learnt at college. It will be a chance to consolidate their skills, to confirm whether or not they can successfully run their own classroom, and generally to become a good all-round classroom teacher.
* Sixteen percent of students see themselves taking university courses next year, continuing a degree they have already started (see also p. 130).
* A few students want to develop their knowledge of specialist areas, but this tends to be something they see as more appropriate for the future.
* Few students have specific plans for their professional development beyond this.

The Future

Students were asked to complete a chart indicating what they would be doing in five years' time.

Table 32

What Students Expect to be Doing in Five Years' Time

Activity	% of students (N=289)
Teaching in a primary classroom	44
Travelling/working overseas	39
Holding a senior position of responsibility in a primary school/ running own school	23
Working in a branch of education but not as a classroom teacher	17
Employed in an occupation outside of education	11
Working as a specialist	17
Full-time domestic responsibilities	7

COMMENTS ON TABLE 32

- The largest group of students, 44%, expect to be teaching in a primary classroom in five years' time.
- Thirty-nine percent felt they would be travelling or working overseas after giving themselves time to get certificated and have some experience behind them.
- Almost a quarter of the students have ambitions to move into senior positions within schools.

How realistic are these expectations? The Teacher Movement Survey published by the Ministry of Education gives some indication of the career movements of teachers. The latest information relates to the period March 1988 - March 1990. A lot has happened in the education sector and in the general employment scene since then and more changes will occur in the next five years, so any observations have to be very tentative. Thirty-nine percent of our students say they could be travelling or working overseas in five years' time, but data covering the period March 1990 - March 1991 show that only 7% of primary teachers left the profession to travel overseas and another 1.6% to teach overseas. This suggests that only one in four of our students will actually achieve their ambitions to travel. On the other hand, the composition of the primary teaching workforce includes 38% of positions at senior teacher level or above (16% are at the senior teacher level) whereas 23% of our students see themselves at that level in five years' time. On these figures, more of our students may in fact move into senior positions.

CONCLUSION

As with the previous two reports, this report has focused on one year of the students' experience, in this case the third year, but it also includes views on some aspects of students' total college experience. In 1992 we expect to interview those students from our cohort who have been appointed to teaching positions. We will be interested in their experiences as first-year teachers, changes in their attitudes towards their college experience and their retrospective comments about the extent to which they believe their training prepared them for the classroom.

As one would expect in the third year of a research study, many of the issues we have commented on in previous years have come to the fore again: the need to recognise the experiences students bring with them to college, the importance of the quality of individual lecturers, the necessity for students to see good practice modelled at the college and in the classroom and the relationship between theory and practice in education.

In discussing our research design in our first report we talked about the need to place any study of teacher education in the wider context of social and economic issues. This aspect has become particularly significant for students in our study, as so few classroom positions were available to them at the end of their training. The cohort of students studied during this project was the first to enter courses of primary training without being guaranteed a teaching job at the end of the course. It is difficult to establish precisely how many of these students were in classrooms at the time this report was written because once students have left the college, staff depend on students notifying the college when they are appointed to a school and there is no necessity for them to do so. We do know, however, that many were without full-time teaching positions. Students were aware during their final year that job prospects were such that only a proportion of them would be appointed to positions in 1992. This disappointed and angered them and their frustration came through in response to a number of our questions, including their motivation to teach. From the students' point of view, this is a bitter and worrying outcome after three years of effort.

For ourselves, it is disappointing to know that the final stage of our study will be undermined by the fact that we can follow only a few of our interview sample into the classroom. We will modify our research design in the final phase to include students who were part of the cohort we surveyed on entry to college and at the end of their training, but not all of whom will have previously been interviewed. This will reduce the amount of longitudinal analysis we had hoped to undertake. As well as following up those students who are in the classroom in 1992, we hope to be able to track most of those who did not win teaching positions.

In our first report we were able to describe some of the values, attitudes and expectations students held when they began their training and their reaction to their first year. Through our second and third reports a cumulative picture has built up of their views of their training based on their reaction to their second and third years with some comments about their overall reaction to their college experience. It will not, however, be until our final report, when we have been able to interview students in the classroom and have further analysed their responses during the four years of the study, that we will have complete data and will be able to consider the extent to which the complete training fulfilled the students' expectations and the extent to which their own values and attitudes changed. The following issues, all of which have already been touched on in one or other of our two earlier reports, are likely to be important topics for discussion in our final report.

Teaching Experience

We have referred on many occasions in all three reports to students' comments about the value of teaching experience. We have also noted the problems colleges face in providing valuable teaching experience sections for all students on all their postings in schools that are easily accessible to the colleges and universities. Students sometimes give the impression that teaching practice and college courses are two quite different experiences, although others acknowledge that they would not have benefited from their experiences in schools had they not been introduced to, for example, teaching approaches in various primary curriculum areas such as reading, before going on section. It is obviously important for teaching practice sections to be closely co-ordinated with the college programme - a fact of which college staff are also aware.

It is not surprising that students value practical experience in classrooms so highly. It is in the classroom that they can demonstrate for themselves, and others, how well they are progressing towards competency in their chosen profession. Teaching experience, both the teaching blocks and other regular contact with children in schools through the various curriculum studies, is, however, an integral part of the *total* training experience. Furthermore, although some students have been placed in classrooms with 'brilliant' teachers, others have encountered 'mediocre' teachers who have served to demonstrate practices students did not want to emulate.

Students are quick to criticise shortcomings in individual lecturers and in some college programmes but most accept that teaching practices advocated by lecturers are in the vanguard of educational opinion. Only rarely did students refer to experiences in schools which they thought were in advance of methods being discussed in college. Student complaints were less likely to be about lecturers advocating out-of-date methods, although they did consider individual lecturers to be out of touch with current classroom practices, than about the problems of linking theory and practice - a perennial issue in teacher education.

The Primary School Curriculum

Students expecting to teach in primary school classrooms are required to be competent in the complete range of subject areas. Our data suggest that the majority of students entering training are most looking forward to teaching in a limited range of curriculum areas and these remain much the same at the end of their training, although the percentage looking forward to teaching most subjects has increased during the course. Conversely, there are some areas students are not looking forward to teaching when they enter college and these also remain much the same at the end of their course.

Furthermore, these tend to be areas where students are likely to have had the least experience in the classroom, either through observing other teachers or through teaching practice themselves. The college requires students to have experience in all areas, but problems of co-ordinating the college programme with teaching practice sections may mean that, for some students, this does not happen, or at best happens infrequently. Also a cause for concern is the number of students who appear to lack confidence about using computers to assist children's learning in the classroom.

Length of College Course: Workload

We commented in the conclusion to our second report that a proportion of the students in our interview sample thought the course was probably too long. This opinion was confirmed by data collected from the total cohort through the final questionnaire. The students' comments need to be seen alongside their comments about the workload for each year. A number of students, both those who thought the course was too long and those who thought it was about right, believed that the workload in at least one year was too light. Students who were critical either wanted the present courses to be compressed and reduced in length, or wanted the course to remain the same length but with more content, particularly practical work closely associated with classrooms.

Revised college programmes may have already gone some way to meet these student criticisms. Furthermore, the introduction of the B.Ed. degree means that, in the future, the course of training for most students will be four rather than three years. This means that the reaction of our students is to a training experience which, over the next few years, will increasingly be out-of-date. Current and future students also enrolling at the university may well be less likely to find the combined college and university workloads too light.

The views of our own cohort of students about the length of training and college workload also need to be seen in the context of factors outside the control of the college, particularly the increased costs associated with training and the poor job prospects for trainees. Students faced with the costs involved in training and uncertainty about winning a position at the end of their course may well wish to complete the course as quickly as possible.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Linked with questions of workload and length of the college course is the question of recognising prior learning and the college's ability to be flexible in providing courses of varying lengths to take account of students' previous experiences and the skills they bring with them to the college. This is particularly important for mature students. The colleges do recognise this factor for a minority of students in such ways as exemption from certain classes and shortened courses for selected students. More systematic consideration is being given to the issue with, for example, a trialled programme for eight primary trainees at the Christchurch College of Education.[10]

Confidence About Teaching

We commented in the conclusion to our second report on how impressed we had been by the commitment of most of those students we had interviewed and their desire to be competent teachers. Despite any criticisms students may have of their training, it says much for the colleges that at the end of the course most students, 97%, describe themselves as either 'confident' (57%) or 'very confident' (40%) about teaching. Only 3% of students say they are 'not very confident'.

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[10] Sheehan, D.C. (1992). *Recognition of Prior Learning Trial: Final Report*, Christchurch College of Education.

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